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OF THE
UNITED STATES,

FROM THE
DISCOVERY OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT.

BY
GEORGE BANCROFT.

VOL. VIII.

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BOSTON:
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THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

EPOCH THIRD.

AMERICA DECLARES ITSELF INDEPENDENT.

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AMERICA DECLARES ITSELF INDEPENDENT.



CHAPTER XLI.

THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS IN MIDSUMMER, 1775.

JUNE 17—JULY, 1775.

IDLE refugees in Boston, and even candid British officers, condemned Howe's attack on the New England lines as a needless exposure of his troops to carnage. By landing at the Charlestown isthmus, they said, he should have cooped the rebels within the peninsula; or by aid of a musket proof gunboat he should have dislodged the party near the Mystic; and, even at the last, by concentrating his force at the rail fence, he might have taken Prescott in the rear. During the evening and night after the battle, the air trembled with the groans of the wounded, as they were borne over the Charles and through the streets of Boston to hospitals, where they were to waste away from the summer heat and the scarcity of

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proper food. The fifth regiment suffered most; the eighteenth and the fifty ninth, which had long been very weak, were utterly ruined; and, to the end of the war, the courage of the insurgents in this battle of the people, and their skill as marksmen, never wore out of mind. The loss of officers was observed to be disproportionately great; and the gloom in the quarters of the British was deepened by the reflection, that they had fought not against an enemy, but against their fellow-subjects and kindred; not for the promotion of civil or religious freedom, but for the supremacy of one part of the empire over another. Those who, like Abercrombie, died of their wounds, wanted consolation in their last hour, for they had no hope that posterity would mark their graves or cherish their memory.

On the day of the battle, the continental congress elected its four major generals. From deference to Massachusetts, the first of these was Artemas Ward. Notwithstanding his ill health, he answered: "I always have been, and am still ready to devote my life in attempting to deliver my native country."

The American people with ingenuous confidence assumed that Charles Lee — the son of an English officer, trained up from boyhood for the army — was, as he represented himself, well versed in the science of war, familiar with active service in America, Portugal, Poland, and Turkey, and altogether a soldier of consummate ability, who had joined their cause from the purest impulses of a generous nature. In England he was better understood. "From what I know of him," wrote Sir Joseph Yorke, then British minister at the Hague, "he is the worst present which could be made to any army."

He left the standard of his king, because he saw "no chance of being provided for at home," and, as an adventurer, sought "employment in any part of the world." Venerating England all the while, and holding it "wretchedness itself not to be able to herd with the class of men to which he had been accustomed from his infancy," he was continually craving intimate relations with British general officers and his old associates. He looked upon the Americans as unworthy of independence, which he never meant they should achieve, and he would have willingly become conspicuous as the instrument to lead them back to their allegiance; but he pursued no consistent plan; and whatever purpose for evil or for good rose in his mind, the eddies of his whims were sure to disturb its course. No position was too high for his conceit; yet he could not steadily pursue intrigues to supplant his superiors. He wrote with vivacity and sometimes with epigrammatic terseness, but never with warmth, for he had no fixed principles, and he loved neither man nor woman. He was subject to "spleen and gloomy moods;" excitable almost to madness, but without depth or persistency in his passions; alike violent and versatile. He passed for a brave man, but he wanted presence of mind, and in sudden danger he quailed. His mobility, though sometimes mistaken for activity, only disguised his inefficiency. He was poor in council; prodigal of censure; downcast in disaster; after success, claiming honor not his own; fit only to cavil and perplex. He professed to be a freethinker, after the type of his century; but he had only learned of scoffers to deny "the God of the Jews," curse the clergy, and hate orthodox dis-

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1775. June 17. senters. His numerous eccentricities were neither exaggerations nor caricatures of any thing American, and in their excess disclosed a morbid mind. Having no fellow feeling with the common people, he wanted capacity to array a nation in arms; and he would have preferred a country of slaves under a lenient master, to a democratic government. His sordid soul had no passion so strong as covetousness; in affluence, he thought his income "miserably scanty," and he was always seeking to escape spending money even on himself. Claiming to "have passed through the higher military ranks in some of the most respectable services of Europe, and to be a major general of five years' standing," he had waited upon congress with the thought of being chosen commander in chief. Before he would consent to take rank after Ward, whom he despised, he exacted a promise of indemnity on renouncing his half pay; and at the very moment of his accepting employment from a body which was looking to France for sympathy, he assured his king of his readiness to serve against the natural hereditary enemies of England with the utmost alacrity and zeal. Ever brooding over the risk he ran, he often regretted having hazarded his "all" in the American cause. Such was the man who, in the probable event of Ward's early resignation, was placed next in command to Washington.

New York had been asked to propose the third major general; she had more than one citizen of superior military talent, but her provincial congress which was consulted, limited the choice to those who possessed "the gifts of fortune," and selected Philip Schuyler. Montgomery hesitated, saying: "His con-

sequence in the province makes him a fit subject for an important trust; but has he strong nerves? I could wish that point well ascertained with respect to any man so employed." Doubts existed in congress, and the vote for him was not unanimous. Born to opulence, accustomed to ease, of a generous, open, and unsuspicious nature, infirm in health, choleric and querulous, Schuyler was ill suited to control undisciplined levies of turbulent freemen, or penetrate the wiles of a crafty foe. With no aptness for the crowded moments of the battle field, he had personal integrity, social consideration, superiority to envy, and patriotism so sincere that he willingly used his credit, influence, and connections to bring out the resources of his native province. In this kind of service no one equalled him.

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For the fourth major general, the choice fell upon Israel Putnam, of Connecticut. Wooster, as well as Spencer, of the same colony, stood before him in age and rank, and equalled him in love of country and intrepidity; but the skirmish at Noddle's Island had been heralded as a great victory, and the ballot in his favor is recorded as unanimous. Of Massachusetts by birth, at the age of thirty seven he began his career in war with the commission from Connecticut of a second lieutenant, and his service had been chiefly as a ranger. His approved courage, adventurous life, and ardent support of the rights of the colonies, had made his house the resort of the patriots of his neighborhood, himself their military oracle; but his fame rested on deeds of personal prowess rather than on concerted action; and at fifty seven he was too old to be taken from his

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1775. Next to these came Horatio Gates, as adjutant  
June. general with the rank of brigadier. He was shallow, vain, and timorous, and of little administrative ability. His ease of manner and comparatively large experience enabled him to render service in bringing the incoherent regiments of novices into order; but from the first he was restless for high promotion, without possessing any one of the qualities requisite in a leader.

The continent took up arms, with only one general officer who drew to himself the trust and love of the country, with not one of the five next below him fit to give him efficient aid, or to succeed to his place.

On the twenty first of June, Thomas Jefferson, then thirty years of age, entered congress, preceded by a brilliant reputation as an elegant writer and a courageous and far-sighted statesman. The next day brought tidings of the Charlestown battle. In consolation for Warren's death, Patrick Henry exclaimed: "A breach on our affections was needed to rouse the country to action." Congress proceeded at once to the election of eight brigadiers, of whom all but one were from New England. The first was Seth Pomeroy, a gunsmith of Northampton, the warm-hearted veteran of two wars; but he was seventy years old, and on perceiving some distrust of his capacity, he retired from the camp before receiving his commission. The second was Richard Montgomery, of New York, seventh from Washington in rank, next to him in



merit; an Irishman by birth, well informed as a statesman, faultless in private life, a patriot from the heart. He was followed by David Wooster, of Connecticut, an upright old man of sixty five, frugal of his means, but lavish of his life; by William Heath, of Roxbury, Massachusetts, a patriot farmer, who held high rank in the trainbands and had read books on the military art, vain, honest, and incompetent; by Joseph Spencer, of Connecticut, a man past sixty, a most respectable citizen, but, from inexperience, not qualified for councils of war; by John Thomas, a physician of Kingston, Massachusetts, the best general officer of that colony; by John Sullivan, a lawyer of New Hampshire, always ready to act, but not always thoughtful of what he undertook; not free from defects and foibles; tinctured with vanity and eager to be popular; enterprising, spirited, and able. The last was Nathaniel Greene, of Rhode Island, who, after Washington, had no superior in natural resources, unless it were Montgomery.

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At a farewell supper, the members of congress all rose, as they drank a health to "the commander in chief of the American army;" to his thanks, they listened in stillness, for the sense of the difficulties which lay before him suppressed every festal cheer.

"A kind of destiny has thrown me upon this service;" thus Washington announced "the cutting stroke of his departure" to his wife, whose miniature he always wore on his breast from the day of his marriage to his death. On the twenty third of June, a day after congress had heard the first rumors of the battle at Charlestown, he was escorted out of Philadelphia by the Massachusetts delegates and many others, with

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music, officers of militia, and a cavalcade of light horse in uniform. "I, poor creature," said John Adams, as he returned from this "pride and pomp of war," "I, worn out with scribbling for my bread and my liberty, low in spirits and weak in health, must leave others to wear the laurels which I have sown; others to eat the bread which I have earned." To his brother, Washington wrote confidently: "I bid adieu to every kind of domestic ease, and embark on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which perhaps no safe harbor is to be found." He went forth not to eat the bread, still less to wear the honors of others, but to hazard his fame and life in the command of an army which had neither discipline, nor permanency, nor proper arms, nor ammunition, nor funds for its support, nor experienced officers; encouraged only by the hope that, by self-sacrifice, he might unbar the gates of light for mankind.

On Sunday, the twenty fifth, all New York was in motion. Tryon, the royal governor, who had arrived the day before, was to land from the harbor; and Washington, accompanied by Lee and Schuyler, under the escort of the Philadelphia Light Horse, was known to have reached Newark. As the colony of New York had been enjoined by the general congress to respect the king's government, the governor and the general were both entitled to be received with public honors; but the people intervened to mark the distinction. On the news that Washington was to cross the Hudson, the bells were rung, the militia paraded in their gayest trim, and at four o'clock in the afternoon the commander in chief, dressed in a uniform of blue, was received at Lispenard's by the mass of the inhab-

itants. Drawn in an open carriage by a pair of white horses, he was escorted into the city by nine companies of infantry, while multitudes, of all ages and both sexes, bent their eyes on him from the housetops, the windows, and the streets. Night had fallen before Tryon landed. Met by a company which he himself had commissioned, and by a few of the magistrates in military costume, he was attended noiselessly to a house in Broadway, keenly suffering from disappointment. He had expected to find the royalists in the undisputed ascendant; and he saw himself left almost alone, an object of suspicion, liable at any moment to arrest. The false informers of the ministry excused themselves by the suddenness of the "change of measures and sentiments;" but they frankly owned that the province would fall behind none in opposition to the king and parliament. Amazed and dejected at heart, Tryon masked his designs under an air of unconcern, and overflowed with bland professions. Washington, who instantly penetrated his insincerity, and had no scruple about the propriety of seizing him, directed Schuyler to keep a watchful eye on his movements, and wrote a warning to congress; but Schuyler, lulled by words of mildness which concealed the most wary and malignant activity, soon reported confidently, that Tryon "would create no trouble."

On the twenty-sixth, the provincial congress of New York, in their address to Washington, "from whose abilities and virtue they were taught to expect security and peace," declared an accommodation with the mother country to be the fondest wish of each American soul, in the fullest assurance that, upon such an accommodation, he would cheerfully resign his

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CHAP. trust, and become once more a citizen. "When we  
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 assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen,"  
 1775. answered Washington for himself and his colleagues;  
 June. but having once drawn the sword, he postponed the  
 thought of private life to the "establishment of  
 American liberty on the most firm and solid founda-  
 tions."

On the next day the New York congress produced its plan of accommodation. It insisted on the repeal of obnoxious acts, the undisturbed exercise, by the respective colonies, of the powers of internal legislation and taxation, and the free enjoyment of the rights of conscience; it conceded to Great Britain the power to regulate the trade of the whole empire; and, on proper requisitions, promised assistance in the general defence, either from the colonies severally, or through a continental congress under a president appointed by the crown. Transmitting their demands to their delegates, they added: "Use every effort for compromising this unhappy quarrel; so that, if our well-meant endeavors shall fail of effect, we may stand unrepachable by our own consciences in the last solemn appeal to the God of battles." The spirit of the colony was in harmony with the rest of the continent; but here too, as everywhere else, preparations for resistance had been deferred; no more than four barrels of powder could be found in the city.

While Washington was borne toward Cambridge on the affectionate confidence of the people, congress, which had as yet supported its commander in chief with nothing beyond a commission, was indulging a hope, by one campaign, to dispose the British government to treaty. How to find the ways and means for



such a temporary resistance was their great difficulty. They represented a fertile and wealthy continent; but even if commerce had not ceased, they possessed no power to lay taxes of any kind. Necessity led, therefore, to the most disastrous of all financial measures; though the country was already languishing under the depreciating paper money of the several colonies, continental bills of credit to the amount of two millions of dollars were authorized, and "the twelve confederated colonies" were pledged for their redemption.

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A code for the government of the continental army was adopted. Two more companies of riflemen were asked of Pennsylvania, that the eight from that colony might form a battalion. The Green Mountain Boys, if they would but serve, were allowed the choice of their own officers; and as Carleton "was making preparations to invade the colonies, and was instigating the Indian nations to take up the hatchet against them," Schuyler, who was directed to repair to Ticonderoga and Crown Point, received authority to take possession of St. John's, Montreal, and any other parts of Canada. To the Indians agents were sent with presents and speeches, "to prevent their taking any part in the commotions." Alliances with them were forbidden, except where some emissary of the ministry should have concerted with them acts of hostility, or an offensive league.

On the sixth of July, congress set forth the causes and necessity of taking up arms. After recapitulating the wrongs of America, they asked, in words which Edmund Burke ridiculed as the "nonsense" of men wholly ignorant of the state of parties in England:

July.

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July.

"Why should we enumerate our injuries in detail? By one statute it is declared that parliament can of right make laws to bind us in all cases whatsoever. What is to defend us against so unlimited a power? Not a single man of those who assume it, is chosen by us; and an American revenue would lighten their own burdens in proportion as they increase ours." Lord North's proposition for conciliation they condemned as insidiously designed to divide the colonies, and leave them nothing but "the indulgence of raising the prescribed tribute in their own mode." After enumerating the hostile acts at Lexington and Concord, Boston, Charlestown, and other places, the seizure of ships, the intercepting of provisions, the attempts to embody Canadians, Indians, and insurgent slaves, they closed their statement in words of their new member, Jefferson: "These colonies now feel the complicated calamities of fire, sword, and famine. We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery. Our cause is just, our union is perfect, our internal resources are great, and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable. Before God and the world we declare, that the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will employ for the preservation of our liberties; being, with one mind, resolved to die free-men rather than live slaves. We have not raised armies with designs of separating from Great Britain and establishing independent states. Necessity has not yet driven us into that desperate measure. We

exhibit to mankind the spectacle of a people attacked by unprovoked enemies, without any imputation or even suspicion of offence. In our own native land, in defence of the freedom that is our birthright, for the protection of our property against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms. We shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed shall be removed, and not before."

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July.

So firm a declaration should have been followed by assuming powers of government, opening the ports to every nation, holding the king's officers as hostages, and modelling a general constitution. Such was the counsel of John Adams. Franklin also knew that there was no longer a time to negotiate or entreat. In the ashes of Charlestown, along the trenches of Bunker Hill, he saw the footsteps of a revolution that could not be turned back; and to Strahan, the go-between through whom he had formerly communicated with Lord North, he wrote, on the fifth of July: "You are a member of parliament, and one of that majority which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns, and murder our people. Look upon your hands, they are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am yours." But Franklin did not attempt to overrule the opinions or defy the scruples of his colleagues, and, after earnest debates, congress adopted the proposal of Jay to petition the king once more.

The second petition to the king was drafted by Dickinson, and in these words put forward Duane's proposal for a negotiation, to be preceded by a truce:

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“ We beseech your majesty to direct some mode by which the united applications of your faithful colonists to the throne, in pursuance of their common councils, may be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation; and that, in the mean time, measures may be taken for preventing the further destruction of the lives of your majesty’s subjects, and that such statutes as more immediately distress any of your majesty’s colonies may be repealed.”

The colonies, by refusing to treat separately and offering to treat jointly, announced their union, which thus preceded their independence. Yet as the king would not receive a document from congress, the petition was signed by the members individually. Dickinson, confident of success, was proud of his work. “There is but one word in it which I wish altered,” said he, “and that is—congress.” “It is the only word I wish should remain,” answered Harrison, of Virginia.

Having thus owned the continuing sovereignty of the king, before whom they presented themselves as beadsmen, the United Colonies, as a nation dealing with a nation, a people speaking to a people, addressed the inhabitants of Great Britain. From English institutions they had derived the principles for which they had taken up arms, and their visions of future greatness were blended with their pride as men of English descent. They spoke, therefore, to Englishmen as to countrymen and brothers, recapitulating their griefs, and plainly setting forth that the repeal of the laws of which they complained, must go before the disbanding of their army, or the renewal of commercial intercourse.



On the same day thanks were addressed to the lord mayor, aldermen, and livery of London, for their unsolicited sympathy. "North America," it was further said, "wishes most ardently for a lasting connection with Great Britain on terms of just and equal liberty; less than which generous minds will not offer, nor brave and free ones receive."

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The desire for harmony was so intense, that Richard Penn, a proprietary of Pennsylvania and recently its governor, a most loyal Englishman, bound by the strongest motives of affection and interest to avert American independence, was selected to bear the second petition to the throne. He assumed the trust with alacrity, and on the twelfth of July embarked on his mission. The hope of success grew out of the readiness of the Americans, on the condition of exemption from parliamentary taxation, to bear the restraints on their trade; or, as an alternative, to purchase a freedom of trade like that of Scotland, by taxing themselves towards the payment of the national debt.

From the complacency engendered by delusive confidence, congress was recalled to the necessities of the moment by a letter from Washington.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### THE ARMY ROUND BOSTON.

JULY, 1775.

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July.

ON Monday, the third day of July, Washington rode forth from his quarters at Cambridge, numerousely attended, and, under an elm tree on the common, assumed command of the continental army. A favorable opinion had gone before him; but his presence was greater than his fame. Of his companions, Mifflin, a brave and honest officer, though not of deep insight, charmed by his activity, spirit, and obliging behavior; the intelligence, culture, and manners of Reed engaged esteem; Lee personally excited disgust, but the general persuasion of his skill and experience in the art of war, and of his sincerity in professing a zealous attachment to "the cause of mankind," assured him the respect of Washington, and a welcome of admiring gratitude from the congress in Massachusetts. Gates, who arrived within a week, gained friends by his affability, and his usefulness in a subordinate station.

From the first moment of his coming, the commander in chief took the hearts of all about him, and of all New England; though he himself was unused to the ways of its people, whose character he never could thoroughly understand. The provincial congress at Watertown welcomed him in a cordial address. From Philadelphia, Hancock expressed the wish to serve under him; Greene and the Rhode Island officers received him with words of affectionate confidence. "Now be strong and very courageous," wrote Trumbull, the governor of Connecticut; "may the God of the armies of Israel give you wisdom and fortitude, cover your head in the day of battle and danger, and convince our enemies that all their attempts to deprive these colonies of their rights and liberties are vain." To Trumbull Washington made answer: "The cause of our common country calls us both to an active and dangerous duty; divine Providence, which wisely orders the affairs of men, will enable us to discharge it with fidelity and success."

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The camp contained a people in arms, rather than an army. No one could tell precisely its numbers, or the state of its stores. The soldiers had listed under different agreements, and for periods indefinite but short. Each colony had its own rules of military government, and its own system of supplies; and the men, chiefly freeholders and sons of freeholders, held themselves bound only by a specific covenant, of which they interpreted the conditions and required the fulfilment.

Immediate orders were given for a return of the state of the army. While this was preparing, Washington visited the American posts and recon-

CHAP. noitred those of the enemy. From Prospect Hill he  
XLII. took a comprehensive view of Boston and Charles-  
town. Of the latter town, nothing was to be seen  
1775. but chimneys and rubbish. Above the ruins rose the  
July. tents of the great body of the British forces, strongly  
posted on Bunker Hill. Their sentries extended  
about one hundred and fifty yards beyond Charles-  
town Neck. On Breed's Hill there was a redoubt;  
two hundred men kept guard at Moultrie's Point; a  
battery was planted on Copp's Hill; three floating  
batteries lay in Mystic river; and a twenty-gun ship  
was anchored below the Charlestown ferry. The  
light horse and a few men were in the town of Bos-  
ton; the remainder were on Roxbury Neck, where  
they were deeply intrenched and strongly fortified,  
with outposts so far advanced, that the sentries of the  
two armies could almost have conversed together.

Of the inhabitants of Boston six thousand seven  
hundred and fifty three still remained in the town,  
pining of sorrow; deprived of wholesome food; con-  
fined to their houses after ten o'clock in the evening;  
liable to be robbed without redress; ever exposed to  
the malice of the soldiers, and chidden for tears as  
proofs of disloyalty.

The number of the British army should have ex-  
ceeded ten thousand men, beside the complements of  
ships of war and transports, and was estimated by the  
American council of war as likely to amount alto-  
gether to eleven thousand five hundred; yet such  
were the losses on the retreat from Concord, at Bun-  
ker Hill, in skirmishes, from sickness, and by deser-  
tion, that even after the arrival of all the transports,  
the commanding officer had never more than sixty



five hundred effective rank and file. But these were the choicest troops, thoroughly trained, and profusely supplied with the materials of war; and as he had the dominion of the water, he was able, as from a centre, to bend them against any one point in the straggling line of their besiegers.

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Washington found the American army dispersed in a semicircle, from the west end of Dorchester to Malden, a distance of nine miles. At Roxbury, where Thomas commanded two regiments of Connecticut and nine of Massachusetts, a strong work, planned by Knox and Waters, crowned the hill, and with the brokenness of the rocky ground, secured that pass. The main street was defended by a breastwork, in front of which sharpened and well-pointed trees, placed with the tops towards Boston, prevented the approach of light horse. A breastwork also crossed the road to Dorchester. The men of Rhode Island were partly on Winter Hill, partly at Sewall's Farm, near the south bank of the Charles. The centre of the army was with Ward at Cambridge, its lines reaching from the colleges almost to the river. Putnam, with a division of four thousand men, composed of troops from Connecticut and eight Massachusetts regiments, lay intrenched on Prospect Hill, in a position which was thought to be impregnable. The New Hampshire forces were fortifying Winter Hill; assisted perhaps by a Rhode Island regiment, and certainly by Poor's Massachusetts regiment, which for want of tents had its quarters in Medford. The smaller posts and sentinels stretched beyond Malden river. Apart, in a very thick wood, near where the Charles enters the bay, stood the wigwams of about

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fifty domiciliated Indians of the Stockbridge tribe. They were armed with bows and arrows, as well as guns, and were accompanied by their squaws and little ones.

The American rolls promised seventeen thousand men; but Washington never had more than fourteen thousand five hundred fit for duty. The community in arms presented a motley spectacle. In dress there was no uniformity. The companies from Rhode Island were furnished with tents, and had the appearance of regular troops; others filled the college halls, the Episcopal church, and private houses; the fields were strown with lodges, which were as various as the tastes of their occupants. Some were of boards, some of sailcloth, or partly of both; others were constructed of stone and turf, or of birch and other brush. Some were thrown up in a careless hurry; others were curiously wrought with doors and windows, woven out of withes and reeds. The mothers, wives, or sisters of the soldiers were constantly coming to the camp, with supplies of clothing and household gifts. Boys and girls, too, flocked in with their parents from the country to visit their kindred, and gaze on the terrors and mysteries of war. Eloquent and accomplished chaplains kept alive the habit of daily prayer, and preached the wonted sermons on the day of the Lord. The habit of inquisitiveness and self-direction stood in the way of military discipline; the men had never learnt implicit obedience, and knew not how to set about it; between the privates and their officers there prevailed the kindly spirit and equality of life at home.

In forming a judgment on the deficiency of num-

bers, discipline, and stores of the army, Washington made allowances for a devoted province like Massachusetts, which had so long suffered from anarchy and oppression. "Their spirit," said he, "has exceeded their strength." In the "great number of able-bodied men, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage," he saw the materials for a good army; but, accustomed to the watchfulness of the backwoodsmen in the vicinity of wily enemies, he strongly condemned the want of subordination, and the almost stupid confidence of inexperience, which pervaded not only the privates but many of the inferior officers. He set diligently about a reform, though it made "of his life one continued round of vexation and fatigue." The great inefficiency lay with the officers. "If they will but do their duty," said Hawley, "there is no fear of the soldiery." Towards the incompetent, who, in the suddenness of calling together so large a body of men, had crowded themselves upward with importunate selfishness, Washington resolved to show no lenity. By a prompt and frequent use of courts martial he made many examples, and by lending no countenance to public abuses, and by insisting on the distinction between officers and soldiers, he soon introduced the aspect of discipline. Every day, Sundays not excepted, thousands were kept at work under strict government from four till eleven in the morning, strengthening the lines, and fortifying every point which could serve the enemy as a landing place. The strong and uniform will of Washington was steadily exerted, with a quiet, noiseless, and irresistible energy. "There are many things amiss in this camp,"

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CHAP. said the chaplain Emerson; "yet, upon the whole,  
XLII. God is in the midst of us."

1775. Meantime, Lee had not been many days in the  
July. camp before the British generals in Boston, who knew him well, showed a disposition to tamper with him for their own purposes. From Philadelphia he had, in June, addressed to Burgoyne, his old comrade in Portugal, a public letter condemning American taxation by parliament, and tracing the malady of the state to the corrupt influence of the crown. In an able reply, Burgoyne insisted, for himself and for Howe, that their political principles were unchanged, and invited Lee to "an interview" within the British lines, for the purpose of "inducing such explanations as might tend in their consequences to peace, for," said he, as if with the highest authority, "I know Great Britain is ready to open her arms upon the first overture of accommodation." Clutching at the office of a negotiator, Lee avoided asking advice of a council of war, and of himself requested the Massachusetts congress to depute one of their body to be a witness of what should pass. That body wisely dissuaded from the meeting, and referred him to a council of war for further advice. Thwarted in his purpose, Lee publicly declined to meet Burgoyne, but he also sent him a secret communication, in which among other things he declared "upon his honor that the Americans had the certainty of being sustained by France and Spain." This clandestine correspondence proved that Lee had then no fidelity in his heart; though his treasons may as yet have been but caprices, implying momentary treachery rather than a well considered system. His secret was kept in America, but the statement found



its way through the British ministry to Vergennes, who pronounced it an absurdity worthy only of contempt.

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All the while skirmishes continued. A party of Americans on the eighth of July drove in the British advance guard nearest Roxbury, and took several muskets. On the evening of the tenth, three hundred volunteers swept Long Island, in Boston harbor, of more than seventy sheep and fifteen head of cattle, and carried off sixteen prisoners. Two days later, just after the arrival of six crowded transports, Greateon, with one hundred and thirty six men, went again to the same island, and burnt the hay which was stacked there for the British cavalry. After a few days more, companies at Weymouth and Hingham reaped and brought off the ripe grain from Nantasket.

On the fifteenth of July, the army of Cambridge heard Langdon, the president of Harvard college, read the declaration by the continental congress for taking up arms, which they interpreted to mean that the Americans would never sheathe the sword till their grievances were redressed to their utmost wishes. On the eighteenth it was read on Prospect Hill amidst such shouts that the British on Bunker Hill put themselves in array for battle; but neither then, nor even after the arrival of their last transports, did they venture an attack or even a sally. "I despair seeing a battle fought this time coming down," wrote Emerson to his wife at Concord.

In conformity to the direction of the continental congress, the people of Massachusetts, holding town meetings according to their usage and their charter,

CHAP. chose a house of representatives. Boston took part  
XLII. in the elections; for the wanderers from that town  
1775. were considered as bearing with them its living spirit,  
July. and the exiles, many of whom had not seen each other since they left their homes, came together at Concord. On the nineteenth the provincial congress dissolved itself forever, and the new house of representatives began the restoration of government by electing James Warren, of Plymouth, as its speaker. The following night, Vose, a major in Heath's regiment, set fire to the lighthouse in Boston harbor, bringing off a field piece, a swivel, and the lamps. The boats of a British man of war, which lay within a mile, pursued the adventurous party; but they were in whaleboats, and escaped by rowing.

The continental fast was rigidly kept on the twentieth; the next day the Massachusetts government was permanently constituted. An annually elected legislature themselves elected an annual council of twenty eight, and that multitudinous body, which also had concurrent legislative power, assumed all executive authority. In a few weeks the old civil and military offices were abolished, and the seal of the commonwealth was changed into an Anglo-American, holding a drawn sword, with the motto: *Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem*, "With the sword he seeks placid rest under liberty." Forty thousand pounds were assessed on polls and estates, and authority was given to issue one hundred thousand more in bills of public credit, varying in amount from forty shillings to one.

"Congress and committees rule every province," said the British commander in chief. He looked

about for colonial sympathy and contributions of men ; but none wished to share his confinement. He sent officers to New York to board emigrant ships from Scotland, in the hope to enlist a few Highlanders. Growing more and more uneasy, on the twenty fourth of July he wrote home that Boston was "the most disadvantageous place for all operations," and he wished himself safely at New York.

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To repair the Boston lighthouse carpenters were sent with a guard of thirty marines. On the evening of the thirtieth, Major Tupper attacked them with a party from Squantum and Dorchester, killed the lieutenant and one man, and captured all the rest of the party, fifty three in number. The Americans had but one man killed and two or three wounded. The next day in general orders, Washington praised their gallant and soldierlike conduct. The country regarded with amazement what Jefferson called "the adventurous genius and intrepidity of the New Englanders."

For all this, Washington, who was annoyed by shoals of selfish importuners, and had not yet become aware how bad men clamorously throng round the distributors of offices, misjudged the Massachusetts people ; but the existence of the army was itself a miracle of their benevolence, and its sustenance during May, June, and July cannot be accounted for by ordinary rules. There was nothing regularly established, and yet many thousands of men were abundantly supplied. Touched by an all pervading influence, each householder esteemed himself a sort of commissary. There were no public magazines, no large dealers in provisions ; but the wants of the army

CHAP. rung in the ears of the farmers, and from every cellar,  
XLII. and barn yard, and field throughout Worcester and  
1775. Hampshire and even Berkshire, such articles of food  
July. as could be spared were devoted to the camp, and  
everybody's wagons were used to forward them.  
But for this the forces must have dispersed; how it  
was done, cannot exactly be told; popular enthusiasm  
keeps little record of its sacrifices; only it was done,  
and though great waste prevailed, the troops of Mas-  
sachusetts, and for a long time also those of New  
Hampshire, were fed by the unselfish care of the  
people, without so much as a barrel of flour from the  
continental congress. It was time for "the confede-  
rated colonies" to interpose.



## CHAPTER XLIII.

CONGRESS STILL HOPES TO AVERT WAR.

JULY 19—AUGUST, 1775.

THE continental congress, acting as a promiscuous executive, neither formed a carefully considered system, nor felt the weight of personal responsibility. It never presented to itself a vivid picture of Washington's situation, and never went in advance to mitigate his difficulties or supply his wants; but, from the first, waited inactively for his appeals.

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On the nineteenth day of July it read his first report from Cambridge, by which it appeared that the army was defective in discipline and in numbers; that officers for the regiments were in excess, while the files were not full; that the order in rank of the major generals and brigadiers had displeased the troops and the New England governments; that still another class of officers was needed, to bring method into the system of supplies; that there was the most urgent want of tents and clothing; of hospitals; of skilful engineers; of every kind of arms, especially

CHAP. XLIII.  
1775. July. of artillery; and above all, of powder. Washington also called to mind, that he had not as yet been furnished with any money whatever.

The next day, though it was strictly kept as the national fast, congress came together to hear from Schuyler, that still greater confusion prevailed at Ticonderoga. The northern army consisted of about twenty eight hundred men, of whom seven parts in eight were from Connecticut, most of them under Wooster, exhibiting all the defects which had shown themselves around Boston. Sentinels sleeping on their posts, disorderly equality between officers and common soldiers, a universal want of discipline provoked Schuyler to anger; but while he found fault enough with all that he saw, he had little power to govern and reform a body of men whose education and manners were uncongenial to his own.

Compelled to look at the condition of the army, congress still shrunk from every act that could endanger the acceptance of its petition to the king. Except the companies of riflemen, who were enlisted only for one year, it called into being no troops whose period of service extended beyond the time when an answer to that petition was expected. On the side of Canada, it did little more than sanction the employment of a body of five thousand men for the protection of the border and the frontier, and confirm Schuyler in his command, subject to its own former orders and the future instructions of the commander in chief. Washington, who had represented the necessity of an army of twenty two thousand men in Massachusetts, was authorized to keep up that number; but no method for obtaining troops was pro-

posed beyond recommendations to the several governments of New England and New York; and no leave was given for permanent enlistments.

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Thus far Franklin, who was constant in his attendance, had left his associates to sound their own way and shape their own policy; but he could maintain silent reserve no longer, and on the twenty first of July, the statesman who, twenty one years before, had at Albany reported a plan of union of provinces, submitted an outline for confederating the colonies in one nation. Each colony was to retain and amend its own laws and constitution according to its separate discretion, while the powers of the general government were to include all questions of war, peace, and alliance; commerce, currency, and the establishment of posts; the army, the navy, and Indian affairs; the management of all lands not yet ceded by the natives. The common treasury was to be supplied, and taxes to be laid and collected, by the several colonies in proportion to their numbers. Congress was to consist of one body only, whose members were to be apportioned triennially according to population, and annually chosen. One of its committees was to wield the executive power.

Every colony of Great Britain in North America, and even Ireland, which was still classed with the colonies, was invited to accede to the union. The imperfections in the new constitution which time and experience would surely reveal, were to be amended by congress with the approbation of a majority of the colonial assemblies. Unless Britain should consent to make acceptable retractions and indemnities, the confederation was to be perpetual. In the

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intention of Franklin, who well knew that the required concessions never would be made, the plan was a declaration of independence and an effective system of a self-perpetuating republic. His scheme aimed at a real, ever enduring union, and it contained the two great elements of American political life: the domestic power of the several states, and the limited sovereignty of the central government.

The proposition of Franklin was, for the time, put aside; nor was the future confederacy to number fewer members than thirteen; for news now came, that Georgia "was no more the defaulting link in the American chain." On the fourth of July, it had met in provincial congress; and on the sixth had adhered to all the measures of resistance. It had also resolved neither to purchase, nor to employ, any slave imported from Africa after that day.

Lord North's proposal had already been declared inadequate; but as it was founded on joint resolves of parliament, officially recommended by Lord Dartmouth, and referred by Virginia, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to the decision of congress, Franklin, Jefferson, John Adams, and Richard Henry Lee were constituted a committee to report on its conditions as a basis for the desired accommodation. Mean-time congress remembered the friendly interposition of Jamaica, whose peculiar situation as an island of planters forbade active assistance, but whose good wishes ministered consolation. America and Ireland also came nearer to each other. In July the merchants of Dublin applauded the Earl of Effingham for "refusing to draw his sword against the lives



and liberties of his fellow-subjects in America;" in the same month congress sent to Ireland a pledge of their unalterable sympathy, and their joy that their own trials had extorted some mitigation of its wrongs. Howe was of an Irish family; to the Irish, therefore, they expressed their amazement at finding his name in the catalogue of their enemies; and they fletched their complaint by adding: "America loved his brother."

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While these addresses were in progress, the British government was exerting every nerve to provide the means of reducing America; and as the aid of Indian tribes was believed to be absolutely necessary, Guy Johnson, acting independently of Carleton, was lavishing promises without bounds on the Six Nations, and the savages of Northwest Canada. An Iroquois chief, who attended the conference at Montreal, consented to take home a very large black war belt, emblazoned with the device of the hatchet, but would engage himself no further; while the other savages, for whom a pipe of wine was broached, feasted on an ox that was named Bostonian, drank of his blood, and sang the war song, with loud promises of prowess when they should be called to the field.

Yet the majority of the congress, scrupulous not to outrun the convictions and sympathies of their constituents, and pleasing themselves by confiding in the speedy restoration of peace, not only made no adequate preparations for resistance, but would not even consent to relieve the state of anarchy by sanctioning the institution of governments in the several colonies. The hesitancy of so many members, especially

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of Dickinson, incensed John Adams, who maintained that the fifty or sixty men composing the congress, should at once form a constitution for a great empire, provide for its defence, and, in that safe attitude, await the decision of the king. His letters to New England, avowing these opinions, were intercepted; and so little were the central colonies prepared for the bold advice, they were published by the royalists as the surest way of destroying his influence, and heaping obloquy upon his name. So hard it was to rend the tie that bound America to England! The king's decision was already irrevocably taken; even while the congress was engaged in timid deliberations to manifest to the world that war and independence, if they came, would come unavoidably. The most decisive measure was the adoption of the paper, prepared by Jefferson, on Lord North's proposal for conciliation.

The American congress asked of the king a cessation of hostilities, and a settlement of the disputed questions by a concert between the crown and the collective colonies; Lord North offered, as the British ultimatum, to treat separately with each assembly for grants towards the general defence and for its own civil government, with the promise that parliament would abstain from taxing the province that should offer satisfactory terms. This proposition was pronounced unreasonable, because it implied a purchase of the forbearance of parliament at an uncertain price; invidious, as likely to divide the colonies, and leave the dissatisfied to resist alone; unnecessary, for America had ever voluntarily contributed fully, when called upon as freemen; insulting, since the de-

mand for money was made with fleets and armies; unjust, as it asked increased contributions without renouncing as an equivalent the monopoly of trade; unwarrantable, as a wrongful intermeddling in the colonial support of civil government; unsatisfactory, since it left the obnoxious acts unrepealed; insufficient, as it did not renounce the claim of a right to alter colonial charters and laws; insincere, as coming from a minister who had declared "that he would never treat with America, till he had brought her to his feet;" and delusive, as it offered no option but of devastation or abject submission. On the other hand, if the king would order a truce and point out a method for treating with the colonies jointly, they would desire nothing better than a colonial constitution, to be established by a mutual agreement.

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Content with this declaration, and clinging to the hope of a speedy adjustment with Britain, congress shunned energetic measures to the last. For the transmission of intelligence, Franklin was selected to organize a post office, and thus came to be known as the first postmaster general; a hospital was agreed to for the army, and Benjamin Church elected its director; the rate of pay of officers and soldiers was finally settled; but these votes added no real strength; what was really wanting was money and munitions of war. For money, a third million of dollars was ordered to be struck in paper bills. To promote their credit, some mode for redeeming them must be devised. There was no commerce, and therefore no hope of revenue from duties upon imports. Besides, congress had no power to enforce taxes of any kind. It was necessary, there-

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fore, to charge each separate colony with the obligation to provide for sinking its quota of the bills issued by the general congress. Here, at the creation of the national finances, the question arose as to the proper principle for the apportionment; whether wealth or population; and, if population, whether slaves should be numbered as well as freemen. After a long opportunity for deliberation, it was agreed that population should constitute the distributive rule; and that all persons, including free negroes, mulattoes, and slaves, should be counted. Thus, to the correct principle of "no representation, no taxation," and of representation in proportion to population, was added the injustice of taxation in proportion to representation; so that the continental revenue was to be sustained by a collective poll tax. Of four annual instalments, by which the continental notes were to be redeemed, the earliest was adjourned to the last day of November, 1779; in other words, was adjourned indefinitely. Paper money, which was never to be sunk but by the concurring action of twelve or thirteen colonies at distant periods, was virtually irredeemable, and would surely depreciate with rapidity; yet the united colonies had no other available resource, when they rose against a king who easily commanded annually twenty millions of pounds sterling in solid money.

There was no mode of obtaining munitions of war but by throwing open the ports and inviting commerce, especially with the French and Dutch colonies; yet the last act of congress, before its adjournment, was the renewal of the agreement, neither



directly nor indirectly to export any merchandise or commodity whatever to Great Britain, Ireland, or to the British, or even to the foreign, West Indies.

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On the first day of August the congress adjourned for five weeks, leaving the insurgent country without a visible government, and no representative of its unity but Washington and the army.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

AMERICA AWAITS THE KING'S DECISION.

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, 1775.

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THE duties of Washington were more various and burdensome than ever devolved upon a European commander. In the absence of an organized continental government, and with a most imperfect one in Massachusetts, it fell on him to take all thought for his army, from its general direction to the smallest want of his soldiers. Standing conspicuous before the world, with apparently no limiting authority at his side, he made it his rule, as a military chief, to obey most scrupulously the directions of the civil power, which, from its inchoate character, was feeble and uncertain, prompt to resolve rashly, destitute of system, economy, and consistent perseverance. In his intercourse with the neighboring colonial governments, whose good will was his main resource, he showed the same deference to their laws, the same courtesy to their magistrates; and his zeal to give

effectiveness to his power, never hurried him beyond his self-prescribed bounds.

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Congress had voted him five hundred thousand dollars, in its rapidly depreciating paper, but the persons who were to sign the bills were dilatory; and in a scene of confusion and discord, without money, without powder, without artillery, without proper arms, he was yet expected to organize victory and drive the British from Boston.

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By the fourth of August the army was already formed into three grand divisions, at Roxbury, Cambridge, and Winter Hill, under the respective command of Ward, Lee, and Putnam. Each division consisted of two brigades, each brigade of about six regiments; but Washington was still unable to return the fire of the enemy, or do more than exchange a few shot by scouting parties; for when, with considerable difficulty, he obtained an accurate return of the amount of powder on hand, he found much less than half a ton; not more than enough to furnish his men with nine rounds of cartridge. The extremity of danger could not be divulged, even while he was forced to apply in every direction for relief. To Cooke, the governor of Rhode Island, he wrote on the fourth of August, for every pound of powder and lead that could possibly be spared from that colony; no quantity, however small, was beneath notice; the extremity of the case called loudly for the most strenuous exertions, and did not admit of the least delay. He invoked the enterprise of John Brown and other merchants of Providence; he sent an address to the inhabitants of Bermuda. His importunate messages were extended

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even to New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and for his aid those colonies readily left themselves bare, till small supplies could arrive from South Carolina and Georgia.

In all his wants, Washington had no safe trust but in the spirit of the country, and that never failed him. Between the twenty fifth of July and the seventh of August, fourteen hundred riflemen, a greater number than congress had authorized, arrived in the camp. A company from Virginia had Daniel Morgan for its captain, one of the best officers of the revolution. His early life was so obscured by poverty, that no one remembered his parents or his birth-place, or if he had had sister or brother. Self-supported by daily labor, he was yet fond of study, and self-taught, he learned by slow degrees to write well. Migrating from New Jersey, he became a wagoner in Virginia in time to witness Braddock's expedition. In 1774 he again saw something of war, having descended the Ohio with Dunmore. The danger of his country called him into action, which was his appropriate sphere. In person he was more than six feet high and well proportioned, of an imposing presence, moving with strength and grace, of a hardy constitution that defied fatigue, hunger, and cold. His open countenance was the mirror of a frank and ingenuous nature. He could glow with vehement anger, but passion never mastered his power of discernment, and his disposition was sweet and peaceful, so that he delighted in acts of kindness, never harbored malice or revenge, and made his house the home of cheerfulness and hospitality. His courage was not an idle quality;



it sprung from the intense force of his will, which bore him on to do his duty with an irresistible impetuosity. His faculties were only quickened by the nearness of danger, which he was sure to make the best preparations to meet. An instinctive perception of character assisted him in choosing among his companions those whom it was wise to betrust; and a reciprocal sympathy made the obedience of his soldiers an act of affectionate confidence. Wherever he was posted in the battle field, the fight was sure to be waged with fearlessness, good judgment, and massive energy. Of all the officers whom Virginia sent into the war, next to Washington, Morgan was the greatest; equal to every occasion in the camp or before an enemy, unless it were that he knew not how to be idle or to retreat. In ten days after he received his commission, he attracted to himself from the valley a company of ninety six young backwoodsmen. His first lieutenant was John Humphreys; his second, William Heth; his sergeant, Charles Porterfield. No captain ever commanded braver soldiers, or was better supported by his officers; in twenty one days they marched from Winchester in Virginia to Cambridge.

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In Maryland, Michael Cresap, then just thirty three years old, on receiving notice by the committee of Frederick, to raise a company, despatched a messenger beyond the Alleghanies, and at his bidding two and twenty of his old companions in arms, leaving behind them their families and their all, came swift as a roe or a young hart over the mountains. From the east side, so many volunteered that he could pick his men; and with light step and dauntless spirit they marched to the siege of Boston. Cresap moved

CHAP. XLIV. among them as their friend and father; but he was not destined to take a further part in the war. 1775. Driven by desperate illness from Washington's camp, Aug. he died on his way home at New York, where he was buried with honor as a martyr. The second Maryland company was commanded by Price, whose lieutenant was Otho Holland Williams.

Of the eight companies from Pennsylvania, William Thompson was colonel. The second in command was Edward Hand, a native of Ireland, who had come over as a surgeon's mate. One of the captains was Hendricks, long remembered for his stateliness of person, his mild and beautiful countenance, and his heroic soul.

The alacrity with which these troops were raised, showed that the public mind heaved like the sea from New England to the Ohio and beyond the Blue Ridge. On the fourteenth of June congress first authorized their enlistment, and in less than sixty days twelve companies were in the camp, having come on foot from four to eight hundred miles. The men, painted in the guise of savages, were strong and of great endurance; many of them more than six feet high; they wore leggings and moccasins, and an ash-colored hunting shirt with a double cape; each one carried a rifle, a hatchet, a small axe, and a hunter's knife. They could subsist on a little parched corn, and game, killed as they went along; at night, wrapped in their blankets, they willingly made a tree their canopy, the earth their bed. The rifle in their hands sent its ball with unerring precision, a distance of two or three hundred yards. Their motto was "LIBERTY OR DEATH." They were the first troops

raised under the authority of the continental congress, and they formed the best corps in the camp. Accustomed to the wild independence of the backwoods, they yet gave an example of subordination, discipline, and vigilance. Enlisted for a year only, many of them, both officers and men, continued in the service during the war, and distinguished themselves in almost every field. They taught the observing Frederic of Prussia to introduce into his service light bodies of sharp shooters, and their example has modified the tactics of European armies.

On the twenty ninth of July, a party of riflemen got behind the guard which the British had advanced on the side of Charlestown, and before it could be supported, killed two men and took five prisoners.

The New England men were not wanting in daring. On the ninth of August the Falcon was seen from Cape Ann in chase of two schooners bound to Salem. One of these was taken; a fair wind wafted the other into Gloucester harbor. Linzee, the captain of the Falcon, followed with his prize, and, after anchoring, sent his lieutenant and thirty six men in a whaleboat and two barges, to bring under his bow the schooner that had escaped. As the bargemen, armed with muskets and swivels, boarded her at her cabin windows, men from the shore fired on them, killing three and wounding the lieutenant in the thigh. Upon this Linzee sent his prize and a cutter to cannonade the town. The broadside which followed did little injury, and the Gloucester men kept up a fight for several hours, till, with the loss of but two, they took both schooners, the cutter, the barges, and every man in them. Linzee lost thirty five men,

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or half his crew. The next day he warped off, carrying away no spoils except the skiff, in which the wounded lieutenant had been brought away.

Meantime Gage endeavored to terrify the Americans and cheer his own soldiers, by foretelling the coming of thousands of Russians and Hessians and Hanoverians. Performing no one act of courage during the summer, he vented his ill humor on his unhappy prisoners; throwing officers of high rank indiscriminately into a felon's jail, to languish of wounds and even to undergo amputation. Pleading for "kindness and humanity" as the "joint rule for their treatment of prisoners," Washington remonstrated; but Gage scorned to promise reciprocity to rebels, menaced "dreadful consequences" for any "barbarity" shown to British prisoners, and further replied: "Britons, ever pre-eminent in mercy, have overlooked the criminal in the captive; your prisoners, whose lives by the laws of the land are destined to the cord, have hitherto been treated with care and kindness; indiscriminately it is true, for I acknowledge no rank that is not derived from the king." Consulting with Lee, Washington, who knew Gage from the day when his want of presence of mind lost the battle on the Monongahela, rejoined: "I shall not stoop to retort and invective. You affect, Sir, to despise all rank not derived from the same source with your own. I cannot conceive one more honorable than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people, the purest source and original fountain of all power. Far from making it a plea for cruelty, a mind of true magnanimity would comprehend and respect it." Towards his supercilious adversary, Washington



professed the purpose of retaliation, as he sent the British officers who were his prisoners into the interior; but he privately countermanded the order, and allowed them liberty on parole. The lenity was ill requited. One of them, Stanhope by name, was base enough to forfeit his honor.

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The arrival of reënforcements and recruits could not inspirit Gage to venture outside of his lines. His pent up troops, impaired by skirmishes, desertions, and most of all by sickness, were disheartened by their manifestly "disadvantageous situation." His own timorousness, presaging "a long and bloody war," figured to itself the maritime powers of Europe taking possession of some of the provinces, and a southern governor falling a prey to negroes. He even confessed to Dartmouth, that he had fears for his own safety; that nothing could justify his risking an attack; that even to quit Boston safely would require the greatest secrecy.

Washington was all the while more closely investing the town. In the night following the twenty sixth of August, with a fatigue party of a thousand, a guard of twenty four hundred, he took possession of Ploughed Hill. On the next day, Gage began a cannonade, which, for the need of powder, could not be returned. On Monday the twenty eighth, the British were seen drawn up on Bunker Hill, and Washington, notwithstanding his want of ammunition, offered battle by marching five thousand men to Ploughed Hill and Charlestown road. Silence was observed on both sides, till three in the afternoon; when it appeared that the British would not accept the challenge. But three days later, Gage enjoyed

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the triumph of cutting down the Boston liberty-tree; and when maurading expeditions returned with sheep and hogs and cattle, captured from islands and along shore, the bells were rung as for a victory.

Notwithstanding present weakness, Washington saw in the courage and patriotism of the country the warrant of ultimate success, and was eager to take every advantage which his resources warranted. Looking beyond the recovery of Boston, he revolved in his mind how the continent might be closed up against Britain. He rejected a plan for an expedition into Nova Scotia; but learning from careful and various inquiries that the Canadian peasantry were well disposed to the Americans, and that the domiciliated Indian tribes desired neutrality, he resolved to direct the invasion of Canada from Ticonderoga, and, by way of the Kennebec and the Chaudière, to send a party to surprise Quebec, or at least draw Carleton to its relief, and thus lay open the road to Montreal.

The war gradually spread over the sea. The assembly of Rhode Island, in June, directed its committee of safety to charter and fit out two armed vessels to protect the trade of the colony; and on the twenty sixth of August it instructed its delegates in congress to propose a continental navy. In July, the legislature of Connecticut ordered the equipment of two armed vessels by the governor, for the defence of its sea-coast. In the same month the committees of safety of South Carolina and Georgia sent out cruisers to watch for a ship expected with gunpowder. Most of the colonies had vessels out on similar errands. Early in August, Washington proposed that Rhode Island should attempt the hazardous project of seizing

a public magazine in Bermuda; for, said he, "we are in a situation which requires us to run all risks." But before the advice could be carried out, George Ord, in a sloop despatched from Philadelphia by Robert Morris under pretence of a trading voyage to New Providence, had taken the magazine by surprise, and in conjunction with a schooner from South Carolina, had carried off more than a hundred barrels of powder. On the second of September, Washington, acting under his general powers, instructed Broughton of Marblehead, as an army captain, "to take command of a detachment of the army of the United Colonies," in a schooner equipped at the continental expense, and to intercept all vessels laden with supplies for the British army. Other vessels were employed under the federal authority, with good success.

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Solicitations to distribute continental troops along the New England shore, wherever British marauding parties threatened a descent, were invariably rejected. The governor of Connecticut, who for the defence of that province desired to keep back a portion of the newly raised levies, resented a refusal, as an unmerited neglect of a colony that was foremost in its exertions; but the general explained with dignity, that he must prosecute great plans for the common safety; that the campaign could not depend on the piratical expeditions of two or three men-of-war, while numerous detachments, to guard the coast, would amount to the dissolution of the army.

From his arrival in Cambridge, "his life was one continual round of vexation and fatigue." The troops of Connecticut and Rhode Island were engaged only to the first of December, those of Massachusetts only

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to the end of the year; and no provision had been made for filling their places. The continental currency, as well as that of all the provinces, was rapidly depreciating, and even of such paper money the paymaster had not a single dollar in hand. The commissary general had strained his credit to the utmost for subsistence for the army; so had Mifflin, who in August had been appointed quarter-master general. The greater part of the troops submitted to a necessary reduction from their stated allowance with a reluctance bordering upon mutiny. There were no adequate means of storing wood against the cold weather, or procuring blankets and shelter. Washington would gladly have attempted a decisive blow; but in September his council of war agreed unanimously, that an attack on Boston was not to be hazarded. The country expected tidings of the rout and expulsion of the British, although the want of powder, of which his stock proved less than his worst apprehensions, compelled him to inactivity, from a cause which he concealed.

Under every discouragement from the conflicting rules and agreements, laws and usages, of separate colonies, he toiled to form an army which he yet knew must fall away from him before victory could be achieved; and "braving the shafts of censure, and pledging a soldier's fame, which was dearer to him than life," he silently submitted to the reproach of having adopted from choice the system of inaction, at which his soul revolted.



## CHAPTER XLV.

CONDITION OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES.

JULY—OCTOBER, 1775.

IN the colonies which were not immediately involved in the war, the officers of the crown should have shown self-possession and forbearance. Adopting this system, William Franklin, the governor of New Jersey, was ever on the alert to soothe, divide, or confuse the patriots, professed an equal regard for the rights of the people and the royal prerogatives, continued the usual sessions of the assembly, and where the authority of his office was diminished, confined himself to complaint, remonstrance, or advice. But the self-organized popular government moved side by side with that of the king; the provincial congress which assembled in May, and again by adjournment in August, directed a general association, took cognizance of those who held back, assumed the regulation of the militia, apportioned a levy of ten thousand pounds, excused the Quakers from bearing arms though not from con-

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tributing to relieve distress, and by providing for the yearly election of its successors, severed from the colonial legislature the appointment of future delegates to the general congress. The new provincial congress, chosen with all the forms of law by the qualified voters of each county, came together in October, and while they anxiously prayed for the re-establishment of harmony with Britain, they so far looked to the contingency of war as to offer to raise four thousand minute men, and actually to enroll two regiments for the continental service. It was on this occasion that William Alexander, commonly called the Earl of Stirling, a man of courage, intelligence, and promptitude, though a member of the royal council, entered the army as colonel of the battalion of East New Jersey. The attempt to raise money by taxation having failed, the expenses were met by a reluctant issue of thirty thousand pounds in bills of credit.

The disposition of New Jersey to languor was confirmed by Pennsylvania, where, from the first, Dickinson acted in concert with the proprietary government; and the ardent patriots, who had less command of public confidence, less influence with the religious parties, less tried ability in statesmanship, less social consideration in the city which was then the most populous and most wealthy in British America, yielded to his guidance. The first Pennsylvania convention, in June, 1774, electing as its president the opulent merchant Thomas Willing, long an opponent of independence, aimed at no continuing political organization, and even referred the choice of the Pennsylvania delegates to congress to the house of representatives, in which loyalists held the majority, and

Galloway exercised unrestricted sway. At the second convention, held in January, 1775, the president, Joseph Reed, exerted all his influence, in public and in private, to defeat the intention of arming and disciplining the province, and to confine the votes as much as possible to the encouragement of manufactures and agriculture; and while with a clear eye he foresaw that the coming summer would form an epoch in history, he desired to be known to the ministry as a person who, though opposed to parliamentary taxation, had such weight and influence in the province, that the British government upon the whole might wish him to be on their side. It was noticed that Dickinson did not make his appearance in the meeting till the day before its dissolution; and then only to ward off the taunts of his enemies. The convention once more left every thing to the legislature; though a motion prevailed, empowering the committee of Philadelphia to give notice, if a provincial congress should again become necessary.

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The events at Lexington and Bunker Hill did not shake the purpose of Dickinson to prevent the meeting of another convention. His wish that the province should move in unbroken array, led him even to importune his opponent Galloway, not to refuse a seat in the next continental congress; and Galloway was excused only at his own urgent request. Had Pennsylvania intrusted the direction of measures of resistance to a convention, composed of men free from religious scruples about taking up arms and unshackled by oaths of allegiance, all domestic conflict would have been evaded. But the wealth and social

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influence of Philadelphia deprecated a revolutionary government, which must emanate from undetermined constituencies and exercise powers undefined; they, therefore, for a time, made common cause with the proprietary. The family of Penn had ceased to be the object of hostile animosities, and had recovered public regard; attached to the Anglican church, their episcopacy was yet of a mild form, free from intolerance and proselyting zeal; and from their interests and their position they were the most sincere friends to conciliation with Britain. Their apostacy from the Society of Friends was so far forgiven, that their policy received the support of the rigid Quakers, whose religious scruples confined them to long-suffering, or peace, or at furthest, to passive resistance. To these elements of power, Dickinson, who still claimed to lead the patriot party of Pennsylvania, added his influence.

The system was wise, if nothing was intended beyond efforts for the restoration of harmony; but it did not provide for ulterior measures. The proprietary and his immediate friends had ties of loyalty which they never would break, and to defeat independence, were swayed by interested motives which would increase in strength in proportion as the necessity for independence should appear. Insincerity, therefore, marked the character of the assembly; no vigorous action proceeded spontaneously from its members. Many of them, who had long held their seats and hankered after a re-election, were led step by step to seemingly bold resolutions; the friends of the proprietary desired to keep up such an appearance as would prevent a transfer of the direction of



affairs to a popular convention; the governor and the assembly understood their relative position perfectly; he joined with them in such acts as could be justified before the king; they, by their own separate vote, adopted the measures which could not receive his official sanction. In this manner the house, in June, appointed a committee of safety, but with Dickinson at its head; and placed at its disposition thirty-five thousand pounds in bills of credit. At the adjourned session, in September, various memorials were presented from primary meetings, in the hope of quickening the energy of their representatives; but they were laid on the table. The coalition was too powerful to be overthrown in the house, but murmurs and well-founded suspicions began to prevail out of doors; Franklin saw the folly of temporizing, dispassionately expressed his opinions, and bided his time.

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The provinces of Delaware and Pennsylvania were under one executive head; and were so nearly united that their inhabitants interchangeably took service in one or both. MacKean, an efficient member of the committee of Philadelphia, was the leading delegate from Delaware for the continent. The conduct of that little colony was unequivocal; its assembly unreservedly assented to the measure of keeping up an armed force, and unanimously assumed their share of the expense. Its first convention, its assembly, and its council of safety, moved together in harmony.

The people of Maryland, happier than that of Pennsylvania, escaped intestine dissensions and insured unanimity, by passing over the proprietary government, and intrusting the conduct of resistance

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to a series of conventions. The prudent, the slow, the hesitating were allowed an influence; but from the first, all parties acquiesced in the principle of deriving all power from the people; and the province, however its movement was sometimes retarded, proceeded courageously in an unbroken line. In November, 1774, it adhered to the association, adopted in the general congress, and its patriotism was confirmed by the austerity of religious zeal. At an adjourned session in December, the Maryland convention, fifty five members being present from sixteen counties, resolved unanimously to resist to the utmost of their power taxation by parliament, or the enforcement of the penal acts against Massachusetts. To this end they voted with equal unanimity a well regulated militia, to be composed of all the freemen of the colony, between fifteen and sixty. They resolved also, that all former difficulties about religion or politics from henceforth should cease, and be forever buried in oblivion; and the benign aurora of the coming republic lighted the Catholic to the recovery of his rightful political equality in the land which a Catholic proprietary had set apart for religious freedom. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, who, under the British government, had not had so much as a vote at the polls, was placed unanimously on the committee of correspondence.

It was throughout the continent a subject of regret, that the zeal of Dulany had grown cool. As he kept silent, the foremost man in Maryland was Samuel Chase, like Dulany a lawyer; less circumspect and less careful of appearances; but strong, downright, brave and persevering; capable of error from rash-

ness, or self-will, but not capable of faltering in the cause which he approved. Vehement even to a fault, he did not always speak softly or shun coarse invective; but his undaunted spirit, his fierce independence of mind, his unbending energy, his scorn of plausible hypocrisy, his eloquence which sprung from his heart and expressed the vigor of his nature, justly won for him the confidence of Maryland.

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That province, like other colonies, had hoped for the recovery of American rights through the interruption of trade; but in April, 1775, a day or two before the arrival of news from Lexington, on occasion of a rumor that New York city was to be fortified and garrisoned, they gave their delegates discretion to proceed "even to the last extremity, if indispensably necessary for the safety and preservation of their liberties and privileges."

The proprietary at this time had no hold on public affection from historic recollections; for he was an illegitimate infant child of the late libertine Lord Baltimore, the last of that name; and it might seem a shame to a commonwealth that its executive power should be transferable by testamentary disposition even to a bastard. Yet the party of the proprietary was strong and wary; had struck deep root into the soil of Maryland itself, and counted Dulany among its friends. The lieutenant governor, Robert Eden, had made himself acceptable and even beloved; had no power to do mischief, and made no attempt to raise the king's standard, maintaining a prudent reserve and acquiescing in what he could not prevent or alter;

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1775 so that he and the proprietary party were regarded in the strife as neutrals, not hostile to the American claims of right.

The convention which met at Annapolis on the twenty sixth of July resolved fully to sustain Massachusetts, and meet force by force. They saw "no alternative but base submission or manly resistance." They therefore "approved of the opposition by arms to British troops." The temporary government which was instituted, was, in its form, a universal association of the people of Maryland, one by one. Recognising the continental congress as invested with a general supervision, it managed internal affairs through a provincial council of safety, and subordinate executive committees, which were appointed in every county, parish, or hundred. It directed the enrolment of forty companies of minutemen; established a military code; authorized the emission of more than a quarter of a million of dollars, in bills varying in amount from sixteen dollars to two thirds of a dollar; and it extended the franchise to all freemen having a visible estate of forty pounds sterling, so that Protestant and Catholic might henceforward go to the polls together. The government thus instituted, was administered with regularity and lenity.

By the prudent inactivity of the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, those four colonies awaited the decision of Great Britain in tranquillity; south of the Potomac, Dunmore precipitated a conflict, which the people of Virginia, educated in the love of constitutional monarchy, and disinclined to change for the sake of change, would gladly have avoided. In spite of their



wishes, the retreat of the governor from Williamsburg foreshadowed the end of the colonial system. The house endeavored not to take things out of their old channel. They revived the memory of Lord Botetourt, and asked only for an administration like his; they reposed full trust in the royal council, a thoroughly loyal body of the king's own selection, and asked only that the governor would conform to its advice. In vain; Dunmore, by a message, on Saturday the twenty fourth of July, summoned the house before him at what he called "his present residence;" that is, on board of a British man-of-war; unless they would come, he would not give his assent even to such of their acts as he approved. Had they appeared, the whole legislature might have found themselves kept as hostages and prisoners. There were parties in Virginia as everywhere else, more or less disinclined to a final rupture. As yet the great majority earnestly desired a continuance of their ancient constitution; but this message could not but be voted unanimously a high breach of the rights and privileges of the house; and in this manner the colonial legislature ceased to exist. In concurrence with the council, the house appropriated money for the expense of ratifying the treaty with the Indians on the Ohio, and then adjourned till the twelfth of October; but no quorum ever again assembled. In the one hundred and fifty sixth year from the institution of legislative government in Virginia, in the person of his governor, the king abdicated his legislative power in the oldest and most loyal of his colonies; henceforward Virginia, reluctantly separating herself from the tried and cherished system of constitutional monarchy, must take care of herself.

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On the seventeenth of July, 1775, her people assembled at Richmond in a convention, which was now, without a rival, the supreme government on her soil. Every procedure was marked by that mixture of courage and moderation which in times of revolution is the omen of success. The military preparations had nothing in view beyond defence; a proposal of volunteer companies in Williamsburg to secure the public money was discountenanced and rejected. Two regiments of regular troops in fifteen companies were called into being; sixteen regiments of minutemen were to keep themselves in readiness for actual service; for the command of the first regiment of regulars, the convention, passing over Hugh Mercer, now a resident of Virginia, elected Patrick Henry, who thus became, for a few months, in rank at least, the provincial commander-in-chief. For the relief of scrupulous consciences in the army, it was made an instruction, that dissenting clergymen might pray with the soldiers and preach to them. Delegates to serve in general congress for a year were elected; and among them once more Richard Bland. Of the same lineage with Giles Bland, who, ninety nine years before had perished as a martyr to liberty, having in his veins the blood of Powhatan and Pocahontas, trained in the college of William and Mary, and afterwards in the university of Edinburgh, he was venerable with age, public service, and a long career of vigilant, unswerving fidelity to civil liberty. Profoundly versed in the history and charters and laws of Virginia, in 1766 he had displayed the rights of the colonies with an uncompromising vigor and prophetic insight, such as Dickinson, who wrote after

him, never could equal. His deep blue eyes are now dimmed; his step has lost its certainty; he rises to decline the appointment; all eyes rest on him, and the convention hangs on his words: "I am an old man, almost deprived of sight; the honorable testimony of my country's approbation shall ever animate me, as far as I am able, to support the glorious cause in which America is now engaged; but advanced age renders me incapable of an active part in the weighty concerns which must be agitated in the great council of the united colonies, and I desire that some abler person may supply my place." The convention having unanimously thanked him for his fidelity, released him from further service only on account of his years. A strong party, at the head of which were Henry, Jefferson, and Carrington, turned for his successor to George Mason, a man of yet rarer virtues, now for the first time a member of a political body. He was a patriot, who renounced ambition, making no quest of fame, never appearing in public life but from a sense of duty and for a great end. "He will not refuse," said Jefferson and Henry, "if ordered by his country." But he was still suffering from an overwhelming domestic grief; as he gave his reasons for his refusal, tears ran down the presiding officer's cheeks; and the convention listened to him with the sympathy of a family circle. At the same time that Mason declined, he recommended Francis Lee, who was accordingly chosen in the room of Bland, yet only by one vote over a candidate who was noted for loyalty, and dread of a democratic republic.

A spirit of moderation prevailed in the election of the committee of safety for the province; Edmund

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Pendleton, who ever desired it might be remembered that "a redress of grievances, and not a revolution of government, was his wish," was placed at its head.

To defray the charges of the late Indian war, and to provide for her defence, Virginia, following the general example, directed an emission of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds in paper currency; the smallest bill to be for one shilling and three pence. George Mason urged the continuance of the land tax and the poll tax, which would have annually sunk fifty thousand pounds; but his opposition was vain; and taxation was suspended for a year.

Having made preparations for security, both against invasions and a servile insurrection, the members of the convention once more declared before God and the world, that they did bear faith and true allegiance to his majesty George the Third, their only lawful and rightful king; and would, so long as it might be in their power, defend him and his government, as founded on the laws and well known principles of the constitution; but that they were also determined to defend their lives and properties, and maintain their just rights and privileges, even at the extremest hazards. "Rather than submit to the rights of legislating for us, assumed by the British parliament," wrote Jefferson from Monticello, "I would lend my hand to sink the whole island in the ocean."



## CHAPTER XLVI.

GEORGIA AND THE CAROLINAS.

JULY—OCTOBER, 1775.

“God grant conciliatory measures may take place; there is not an hour to be lost; the state of affairs will not admit of the least delay:” such was the frank message sent to the ministry in July by the able Sir James Wright, of Georgia; and from a province in which “a king’s governor had little or no business,” he pressed for leave to return to England and explain and enforce his advice. The people met in congress; a council of safety maintained an executive supervision; local affairs were left to parochial committees; but the crown officers were not molested, and but for sympathy with South Carolina, and rumors of attempts to excite slaves to desolate the heart of the colony, Indians to lay waste the frontier, some good appearance of authority would have been kept up. When in Savannah the chief justice refused to accept

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bail for a South Carolina recruiting officer, a crowd broke open the gaol and set the prisoner free; and on the fifth of August he beat up for men at the door of the chief justice himself and hard by the house of the governor. The militia officers were compelled to sign the association; and navigation was so effectually regulated, that a ship which arrived with two hundred and four slaves, was compelled to go away without landing them. In September two hundred and fifty barrels of powder were taken by the "liberty" people from a vessel at Tybee.

South Carolina needed more than ever a man of prudence at the head of the administration; and its new governor owed his place only to his birth. The younger son of a noble family, Lord William Campbell knew nothing of the people whom he was to govern, and he put himself under the direction of the passionate and violent among his irresponsible subordinates. The more temperate, especially Bull, the lieutenant governor, kept aloof, and had no part in his superciliousness and mistakes. The planters were disposed to loyalty from affection and every motive of interest; but he would not notice the elements for conciliation, nor listen to the advice of the considerate and best informed. The council of safety, composed of seventeen men, elected by the convention in June, proved its dislike of independence by choosing Henry Laurens for its president; but the governor wrote home, that "the people of the best sense and the greatest authority, as well as the rabble, had been gradually led into the most violent measures by a set of desperate and designing men;" and he planned the reduction of the province by arms.

He delayed calling an assembly, in the hope of hearing "favorable news from the northward" to "moderate the frenzy with which all ranks seemed possessed;" but while intercepted letters revealed the tampering of British agents with Indians, on the eighth of July tidings arrived from Boston of the battle of Bunker Hill. On the tenth, Campbell met his first legislature; and in his opening speech, refusing to discuss the questions that had arisen, he denied by implication the existence of grievances. "I warn you," said he, "of the danger you are in; the violent measures adopted cannot fail of drawing down inevitable ruin on this flourishing colony." These criminations and menaces left little hope of escaping war; the assembly lingered inactive through the summer, and asked in vain to be adjourned.

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The patriot party was composed chiefly of residents in the low country, and hardly formed a majority of the inhabitants of the colony. The best educated were so unanimous, that when Campbell needed one more member of the council, to make up the quorum which required but three, he was under a necessity to appoint an Englishman who was collector of the port; for, said he, "there is not another person in the province whom I can recommend, who would accept of that honor, in so low an estimation is it at present held." But in the districts of Camden and Ninety-six he was assured that thousands were animated by affection to the king. In the region from the line of the Catawba and Wateree to the Congaree and Saluda, and all the way to Georgia, embracing the part of South Carolina where there were the fewest slaves, the rude settlers had no close sympathy with the

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planters. Instead of raising indigo or rice, they were chiefly herdsmen; below, the Protestant Episcopal church was predominant; the land above tide-water was thronged with various Christian sects. They had no common family recollections or ancestry, no ties by frequent intermarriages; a body of Germans who occupied Saxe Gotha on the Congaree, looked to the king as their landlord, and would not risk an ejection from their farms; others, recently escaped from poverty in Europe, sought only subsistence and quiet in America. Still less did the two populations blend in political affinities; legislative power under the provincial government rested exclusively in the hands of men of the church of England; delegates were elected only from the parishes, near the sea; west of Orangeburg there had been no representation; and the occupants of the land, as a class, were too newly arrived, and too ignorant of the questions at issue, and too little trained to a participation in public life, to have fixed opinions. The planters were in constant connection with England; enough of them had been bred there to give a tone to society, and a direction to opinion; they looked down upon the boors of the interior as "men of low degree, though of eminence in that new country; totally illiterate, though of common natural parts;" and there were not wanting agents or partisans of the crown—Fletchall, the very active and spirited Robert Cunningham, Patrick Cunningham and others—to fill the minds of these rude husbandmen with bitterness against "the gentlemen." The summer was passed in indecisive struggles for superiority; the crown had its emissaries, whom the council of safety sent William Henry Drayton and



a clergyman, William Tennent, to counteract. The opposing parties prepared for war; Fort Augusta in Georgia was taken and held by the Americans; the possession of the fort at Ninety-six was disputed. Quiet was restored by a truce rather than by the submission of the royalists. It was on this occasion that Andrew Pickens was first heard of as a captain in arms; a puritan in religion; a patriot in thought and deed. On the other hand, Moses Kirkland, who had accepted a commission from the council of safety, changed sides, came down to Campbell with the assurance, that on the appearance of a British force, it would be joined by four thousand men, and was sent to the commander in chief at Boston for the purpose of discussing an expedition against the South. The inhabitants of the interior desired to be let alone; if compelled to take sides, a large body of them, probably a majority, inclined to the royal standard.

This deep and seemingly irreconcilable division was a fearful embarrassment to the patriots; the danger from the savages was more terrible; and the discovery that a large body of them stood ready to seize the hatchet and the scalping knife at the king's behest, set the community in a blaze. Stuart, the Indian agent for the Southern department, knew the Red Men too well to advise calling them down; but he loved his office, and had withdrawn from Charleston to St. Augustine, where he was open to the worst suggestions of the most reckless underlings, who yet were always clamoring at his dilatoriness and inefficiency. The quickening authority of Gage was invoked; and one of the last acts of that commander was to write to him from Boston: "The people of

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Carolina in turning rebels to their king have lost all faith; improve a correspondence with the Indians to the greatest advantage, and even when opportunity offers, make them take arms against his majesty's enemies, and distress them all in their power; for no terms are now to be kept with them; they have brought down all the savages they could against us here, who, with their riflemen, are continually firing upon our advanced sentries; in short, no time should be lost to distress a set of people so wantonly rebellious; supply the Indians with what they want, be the expense what it will, as every exertion must now be made on the side of government." On receiving this order, in which Indians and riflemen of the backwoods were purposely confounded, Stuart promised the strictest obedience; he sent by way of Pensacola to the Lower Creeks and even to the Chickasaws; he looked with impatience for answers to his messages to the different nations. To the Upper Creeks he despatched his own brother as confidential envoy, "to say publicly, that the want of trade and ammunition was entirely owing to the rebels;" that, "if they would attach themselves to the king's interest, they should find plenty pouring in upon them;" and he was also to bribe Emistisico, the great chief of the Upper Creeks, by promising him, "in private, the greatest honor and favor, if he would exert himself to bring the king's rebellious white subjects to reason and a sense of their duty." The same method was pursued with the Second Man of the Little Tallassees, and with the Overhill Cherokees and their assembled chiefs; to whom, as well as to the Upper Creeks, ammunition was distributed, that they might be ready "to act in the execution of

any concerted plan for distressing the rebels." Cameron, the deputy agent, shrunk from the thought, saying: "I pray God there may be no intention to involve the Cherokees in the dispute; for should the Indians be prompted to take up the hatchet against the colonies, they could not be restrained from committing the most inhuman barbarities on women and children. I am averse to acts of this nature, though my duty to my sovereign exceeds all other considerations."

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But the greatest danger to the planters was from the sea, and the council of safety slowly and reluctantly admitted the necessity of defending the harbor of Charleston. During the summer, ships were boarded off Savannah river, and near St. Augustine, and more than twenty thousand pounds of gunpowder were acquired. The export of rice was allowed on no other terms than that it should be exchanged for arms and ammunition, which were obtained from Hispaniola and from the French and Dutch islands. The governor was all the while urging the ministry to employ force against the three southernmost provinces; and the patriots were conscious of his importunities. A free negro man of property, charged with the intention of piloting British ships up the channel to the city, perished on the gallows, though protesting his innocence. All who refused the association were disarmed, even though they were in the service of the crown. On the thirteenth of September, just after a full discovery of the intrigues of the governor with the country people, his arrest was proposed; yet, on the opposition of Rawlins Lowndes, the motion was defeated in the general committee by a vote of twenty



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three against sixteen; but the council of safety ordered William Moultrie, colonel of the second regiment, to take possession of Fort Johnson, on James Island. Aware of the design, the governor sent a party to throw the guns and carriages from the platform; and on the fifteenth of September, having suddenly dissolved the last royal assembly ever held in South Carolina, he fled for refuge to comfortless quarters on board the small man-of-war, the Tamer. During the previous night, three companies commanded by Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Bernard Elliott, and Francis Marion, under Lieutenant Colonel Motte, dropped down with the ebb tide from Gadsden's wharf, landed on James Island, and entered the fort, in which but three or four men remained. Lord William Campbell sent Innis, his secretary, in the boat of the Tamer, to demand "by what authority they had taken possession of his majesty's fort;" and an officer appeared and answered: "We are American troops, under Lieutenant Colonel Motte; we hold the fort by the express command of the council of safety." "By whom is this message given?" Without hesitation the officer replied: "I am Charles Cotesworth Pinckney;" and the names of Motte and Pinckney figured in the next despatches of the governor. Moultrie was desired to devise a banner; and as the uniform of the colony was blue, and the first and second regiments wore on the front of their caps a silver crescent, he gave directions for a large blue flag with a crescent in the right-hand corner. A schooner was stationed between Fort Johnson and the town, to intercept the man-of-war's boats. A post was established at Haddrell's Point, and a fort on Sullivan's Island was proposed.



The tents on James Island contained at least five hundred men, well armed and clad, soldier-like in their deportment, and strictly disciplined. They were taught not merely the use of the musket, but the exercise of the great guns. The king's arsenal supplied cannon and balls. New gun carriages were soon constructed, for the mechanics, almost to a man, were hearty in the cause. Hundreds of negro laborers were brought in from the country to assist in work. None stopped to calculate expense.

The heroic courage of the Carolinians, who, from a generous sympathy with Massachusetts, went forward to meet greater danger than any other province, was scoffed at by the representatives of the king as an infatuation. Martin, of North Carolina, making himself busy with the affairs of his neighbors, wrote in midsummer: "The people of South Carolina forget entirely their own weakness and are blustering treason, while Charleston, that is the head and heart of their boasted province, might be destroyed by a single frigate, and the country thereby reduced to the last distress. In charity to them and in duty to my king and country, I give it as my sincere opinion, that the rod of correction cannot be spared." A few weeks later, Lord William Campbell chimed in with him, reckoning up the many deadly perils by which they were environed: "the Indians;" "the disaffected back country people;" their own social condition, "where their slaves were five to one;" and the power of Britain from the sea. Before the world they offered their fortunes, the safety of their families, and their own lives in witness to their love of freedom. From Charleston harbor Campbell wrote in October: "Let

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it not be entirely forgot, that the king has dominions in this part of America. What defence can they make?

Three regiments, a proper detachment of artillery, with a couple of good frigates, some small craft, and a bomb-ketch, would do the whole business here, and go a great way to reduce Georgia and North Carolina to a sense of their duty. Charleston is the fountain-head from whence all violence flows; stop that, and the rebellion in this part of the continent will soon be at an end."

North Carolina, fourth among the thirteen colonies in importance, ranking next to Pennsylvania, was happy in the natural security of its position, and its comparative unanimity. In the low country, for the distance of a hundred miles from the sea, all classes were penetrated with the enthusiasm for liberty. Men whom the royalists revered as of "the first order of people in the country," of unblemished integrity and earnest character, loyal by nature, gave thoughtful consideration to the political questions in issue, and decided irrevocably against the right of the British parliament to tax the colonies. In Brunswick county, Robert Howe, formerly captain of Fort Johnston, employed himself in training the people to arms; though Martin, the royal governor, held his military talents in light esteem. At Newbern, the capital, whose name kept in memory that its founders were emigrants from the highlands of Switzerland, volunteers openly formed themselves into independent companies. Afraid of being seized, Martin, suddenly shipping his family to New York, retreated to Fort Johnston on Cape Fear river. He had repeatedly offered to raise a battalion from the Scottish High-

landers in Carolina, and declared himself sure of the allegiance of the Regulators, who were weary of insurrection and scrupulous about their oaths. Again and again he importuned to be restored to his old rank in the army as lieutenant colonel, promising the greatest consequences from such an appointment. He could not conceal that "the frenzy" had taken possession of all classes of men around him, and that the news of the affair at Lexington had universally wrought a great change, confirming the seditious, and bringing over to them vast numbers of the fickle, wavering, and unsteady multitude. Being absolutely alone, at the mercy of any handful of insurgents who should take the trouble to come after him, his braggart garrulity increased with his impotence; and having formerly called for three thousand stand of arms, he now wrote for fourfold that number, ten thousand at least, to be sent immediately from England, with artillery, ammunition, money, some pairs of colors, and a military commission for himself; promising, with the aid of two regiments, to force a connection with the interior, and raise not the Highlanders alone, but the people of the upper country in such overwhelming numbers, as to restore order in the two Carolinas, "hold Virginia in awe," and recover every colony south of Pennsylvania.

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After the termination of the seven years' war, very few of the Highland regiment returned home; soldiers and officers choosing rather to accept grants of land in America for settlement. Many also of the inhabitants of North Western Scotland, especially of the clans of Macdonald and Macleod, listened to overtures from those who had obtained concessions of vast domains, and migrated to Middle Carolina; tearing themselves,



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with bitterest grief, from kindred whose sorrow at parting admitted no consolation. Those who went first, reported favorably of the clear, sunny clime, where every man might have land of his own; the distance and the voyage lost their terrors; and from the isles of Rasay and Skye whole neighborhoods formed parties for removal, sweetening their exile by carrying with them their costume and opinions, their old Celtic language and songs.

Distinguished above them all was Allan Macdonald of Kingsborough, and his wife Flora Macdonald, the same who, in the midsummer of 1746, yielding to a womanly sympathy for distress, had rescued Prince Charles Edward from his pursuers, with a self-possession, fertility of resources, courage, and fidelity, that are never mentioned but to her honor. Compelled by poverty, they had removed to North Carolina in 1774, and made their new home in the west of Cumberland county. She was now about fifty-five, mother of many children, of middle stature, soft features, "uncommonly mild and gentle manners, and elegant presence." Her husband had the graceful mien and manly looks of a gallant Highlander, aged, but still with hair jet black, a stately figure, and a countenance that expressed intelligence and steadfastness. On the third of July he came down to Fort Johnston, and concerted with Martin the raising a battalion of "the good and faithful Highlanders," in which he was himself to be major, and Alexander Macleod, an officer of marines on half-pay, was to be the first captain. They were to wait the proper moment to take the field; but the design, though secretly devised, did not remain concealed;



and rumor added a purpose of inviting the negroes to rise. CHAP.  
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The spirit of resistance, quickened by the tidings which came in from Bunker Hill, extended itself more and more widely and deeply. On the waters of Albemarle Sound, over which the adventurous skiffs of the first settlers of Carolina had glided before the waters of the Chesapeake were known to Englishmen, the movement was assisted by the writings of young James Iredell, from England; by the letters and counsels of Joseph Hewes; and by the calm wisdom of Samuel Johnston of Edenton, a native of Dundee in Scotland, a man revered for his integrity, thoroughly opposed to disorder and to revolution, if revolution could be avoided without yielding to oppression. The last provincial congress had invested him contingently with power to call a new one; on the tenth of July he issued his summons to the people of North Carolina to elect their delegates. But two days later, Dartmouth wrote from the king: "I hope that in North Carolina the governor may not be reduced to the disgraceful necessity of seeking protection on board the king's ships;" and just then Martin slunk away from land, and took refuge on board the Cruiser. On the eighteenth a party came down, and, encouraged by the presence of John Ashe and Cornelius Harnett, set the fort on fire before his face, and within reach of the guns of the man-of-war.

As soon as the deliberations at Philadelphia would permit, Richard Caswell, a delegate to the general congress, hastened home to recommend and promote a convention, and to quicken the daring spirit of his constituents. He had with reluctance admitted the

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necessity of American resistance; but having once chosen his part, he advocated the most resolute conduct, and even censured the Newbern committee for allowing the governor to escape.

On Monday, the twenty-first of August, the people of North Carolina assembled at Hillsborough in a congress, composed of more than one hundred and eighty members. A spirit of moderation controlled and guided their zeal; Caswell proposed Samuel Johnston as president, and he was unanimously elected. In a vituperative, incoherent, interminable proclamation, Martin had warned the people against the convention, as tending to unnatural rebellion; that body, in reply, voted his proclamation "a false and seditious libel," and ordered it to be burnt by the common hangman. They professed allegiance to the king, but in the plainest words avowed the purpose to resist parliamentary taxation "to the utmost." They resolved, that the people of the province, singly and collectively, were bound by the acts of the continental and provincial congresses, because in both they were represented by persons chosen by themselves. A conference was had with the Regulators, whose religious and political scruples were thus removed. The intrigue of Martin with the Highlanders was divulged by Farquhard Campbell, and a committee, on which were many Scots, urged them, not wholly without success, to unite with the other inhabitants of America in defence of rights derived from God and the constitution. The meditated resistance involved the institution of government; a treasury, which for the time was supplied by an emission of paper money; the purchase of ammunition and arms; an embodying of a

regular force of one thousand men; an organization of the militia of the colony; an annual provincial congress to be elected by all freeholders; a committee of safety for each of the six districts into which the province was divided; a provincial council, consisting of the president of the convention and two members from each of the six divisions, as the great executive power. Richard Caswell, who, for the combined powers of wisdom and action, stands out as the foremost patriot of North Carolina, efficient in building up society on its new foundation, a financier of skill and integrity, a courageous statesman, and a man of capacity for war, was detained by the people in their immediate service; and John Penn, a Virginian by birth, became his successor in the general congress.

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The most remarkable subject brought before the convention was Franklin's plan of a confederacy, which, on the twenty fourth of August, was introduced by William Hooper; like Franklin, a native of Boston; trained under James Otis to the profession of the law; now a resident in Wilmington, "the region of politeness and hospitality," of commerce, wealth, and culture. North Carolina was always prompt to respond to the call of her sister colonies; her convention listened with ready sympathy to the proposition, though it included a system of independence and government, and it was about to be adopted. But in the committee of the whole house, the moderating prudence of Johnston interposed; and, by his persuasion, North Carolina consented to forego the honor of being the first to declare for a permanent federal union. On Monday, the fourth of September, it was voted, but not unanimously, that a general confed-

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eration was not at present eligible; that a further confederacy ought only to be adopted in case of the last necessity, and then only after consultation with the provincial congress. Hooper acquiesced, and the house adopted unanimously his draft of an address to the inhabitants of the British empire, most solemnly disavowing the desire of independence, consenting to the continuance of the old, injurious, and oppressive regulation of trade, and asking only to be restored to the state existing before 1763.

On the eighteenth of October the provincial council held its first meeting. Among its members were Samuel Johnston; Samuel Ashe, a man whose integrity even his enemies never questioned, whose name a mountain county and the fairest town in the western part of the commonwealth keep in memory; Abner Nash, an eminent lawyer, described by Martin as "the oracle of the committee of Newbern, and a principal promoter of sedition;" but on neither of these three did the choice of president fall; that office of peril and power was bestowed unanimously on Cornelius Harnett, of New Hanover, whose earnestness of purpose and disinterested, unquenchable zeal had made him honored as the Samuel Adams of North Carolina. Thus prepared, the people of that colony looked towards the future with dignity and fearlessness. The continent, still refusing to perceive the impending necessity of independence, awaited the answer to its last petition to the king.



## CHAPTER XLVII.

EFFECT OF BUNKER HILL BATTLE IN EUROPE.

JULY 25—AUGUST, 1775.

DURING the first weeks of July the king contemplated America with complacency; assured that, in New York, his loyal subjects formed the majority, that in Virginia the rebels could be held in check by setting upon them savages and slaves. Ships were to be sent at once; and if they did not reduce the country, the soldiery would finish the work at the very worst in one more campaign. Alone of the ministers, Lord North was ill at ease, and when a friend said to him, "The rebels may make you propositions," he replied with vivacity, "Would to God they may." Neither the court, nor the ministers, nor the people at large had as yet taken a real alarm. Even Edmund Burke, who, as the agent of New York, had access to exact information and foresaw an engagement at Boston, believed that Gage, from his discipline and artillery as well as his considerable numbers, would beat "the raw American troops," and succeed. An hour be-

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fore noon of the twenty fifth, tidings of the Bunker Hill battle reached the cabinet, and spread rapidly through the kingdom and through Europe. "Two more such victories," said Vergennes, "and England will have no army left in America." The great loss of officers in the battle saddened the anticipations of future triumphs; the ministry confessed the unexampled intrepidity of the rebels; many persons from that time believed, that the contest would end in their independence: but difficulties only animated the king; no one equalled him in ease, composure, and even gayety. He would have twenty thousand regular soldiers in America by the next spring. Barrington, the secretary at war, was of opinion, "that no such number could be procured;" he therefore entreated the secretary of state to give "no expectation of the kind in the despatches going out to the colonies;" and he wrote plainly to his sovereign: "The proposed augmentation cannot possibly be raised, and ought not to be depended on." But George the Third, whose excitement dispelled hesitation and gloom and left in his heart nothing but war, threw his eye confidently over the continent of Europe, resolved at any cost to accomplish his purpose.

Aug.

The ministers were of opinion that Gage, at an early day, ought to have occupied the heights of Dorchester and of Charlestown; and he was recalled, though without official censure. For the time, the command in America was divided; and assigned in Canada to Carleton, in the old colonies to Howe. Ten thousand pounds and an additional supply of three thousand arms were forwarded to Quebec, and notwithstanding the caution of Barrington, word was

sent to Carleton, that he might depend upon a reinforcement of regular troops, that it was "hoped the next spring to have in North America an army of twenty thousand men, exclusive of the Canadians and Indians." The first contribution was made by the king as elector of Hanover; nor did he drive a hard bargain with the British treasury: his predecessor, through Newcastle, took so much for the loan of Hanoverian troops, that no account of the payment could be found; George the Third asked only the reimbursement of all expenses. His agent, Colonel William Faucitt, leaving England early in August, stopped at The Hague just long enough to confer with Sir Joseph Yorke on getting further assistance in Holland and Germany, and straightway repaired to Hanover to muster and receive into the service of Great Britain five battalions of electoral infantry. They consisted of two thousand three hundred and fifty men, who were to be employed in the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca, and thus to disengage an equal number of British troops for service in America. The recruiting officers of Frederic of Prussia and of other princes environed the frontier with the express design of tempting them to desert; for they were supposed to have an aversion for the sea. The port of Ritzebüttel, near the mouth of the Elbe, in the territory of Hamburg, was selected as the place of their embarkation, which was courteously promoted by the senate of that republic. It was the fifth of October before they got on board the transports, and then a strong south-west wind that blew incessantly for several weeks, locked them up till the afternoon of the first of November.

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Three days after the arrival of the news of the Charlestown battle, Rochford, the secretary of state, called the attention of De Guines, the French ambassador, to the dispute with the colonies; and remarked that “many persons of both parties were thoroughly persuaded that the way to terminate the war in America, was to declare war against France.” De Guines suppressed every sign of indignation or of surprise; and encouraged the secretary’s communicativeness. It was declared to be the English opinion, that England now, as before the last peace, was a match for Spain and France united; that, in the event of a war with those powers, America, through fear of the recovery of Canada by France, would give up her contest and side with England. Rochford repeated these remarks to the Spanish minister, from indiscretion, or in the hope to intimidate the two courts; but as the ministry had no object so dear as that of keeping their places, it followed that if the nation should clamor for an attack on the house of Bourbon, they would at once become belligerent. The subject was calmly revolved by Vergennes; who was unable to imagine, how sensible people could regard a war with France as a harbor of refuge; especially as her marine, which had been almost annihilated, was restored. “The English cabinet is greatly mistaken,” said he, “if it thinks we regret Canada; it may come to pass that they will themselves repent having made its acquisition.” He felt the need of gaining exact information on the state of opinion in America. For that end accident offered a most trusty agent in De Bonvouloir, a French gentleman, cousin german to the Marquis de Lambert; a man of good judgment and impenetrable secrecy.



He had been driven from St. Domingo by the climate, had returned by way of the English colonies, had, at Philadelphia, New York, Providence, and near Boston, become acquainted with insurgent Americans; and he reported that in America every man was turned soldier; that all the world crowded to the camp of liberty. The proposition to send him back to America was submitted by the ambassador at London through Vergennes to Louis the Sixteenth, who consented. Here is the beginning of his intervention in the American revolution. Neither his principles nor his sentiments inclined him to aid insurgents; but the danger of an attack from the English was held before his eyes, and on the seventh of August Vergennes could reply to De Guines: "Be assured, sir, the king very much approves sending Bonvouloir with such precaution that we can in no event be compromised by his mission. His instructions should be verbal, and confined to the two most essential objects: the one, to make to you a faithful report of events and of the prevailing disposition of the public mind; the other, to secure the Americans against that jealousy of us, with which so much pains will be taken to inspire them. Canada is for them the object of distrust: they must be made to understand that we do not think of it at all; and that far from envying them the liberty and independence which they labor to secure, we admire the nobleness and the grandeur of their efforts, have no interest to injure them, and shall with pleasure see happy circumstances place them at liberty to frequent our ports; the facilities that they will find there for their commerce will soon prove to them our esteem." With

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these instructions Bonvouloir repaired to the Low Countries, and after some delay found at Antwerp an opportunity of embarking for the colonies. His report might open the way for relations and events of the utmost importance. Yet all the while the means of pacifying America were so obvious, that Vergennes was hardly able to persuade himself they could be missed by the English ministers. The folly imputed to them was so great, and was so sure to involve the loss of their possessions, that he called in question the accounts which he had received. The ambassador replied: "You say what you think ought to be done, but the king of England is the most obstinate prince alive, and his ministers will never adopt the policy necessary in a great crisis, for fear of compromising their safety or their places."

The affairs of the United Colonies were at that time under discussion in the heart of the Russian empire, the ancient city of Moscow, at the court of Catharine the Second. The ruling opinion in Russia demanded the concentration of all power in one hand. From the moment the empress set her foot on Russian soil, it became her fixed purpose to seize the absolute sway and govern alone. Though she mixed trifling pastime with application to business, and for her recreation sought the company of the young and the very gay, she far excelled those around her in industry and knowledge. Frederic said of her, that she had an infinity of talent and no religion; yet she went over to the Greek church and played the devotee. Distinguished for vivacity of thought and judgment, for the most laborious attention to affairs, very proud of the greatness and power of her empire,

her intercourse with all her subjects was marked by mildness and incomparable grace; and she made almost incredible exertions as a monarch to be useful even to the meanest, to benefit the future as well as the present age. Tragedy, comedy, music wearied her; she had no taste but to build, or to regulate her court; no ambition but to rule and to make a great name; and this led her to undertake too much herself without sufficient aid from her ministers. In the crowd of courtiers, who were all eager for advancement and favor, she compared herself to a hare worried by many hounds; and among an unscrupulous nobility in a land which was not that of her birth, she was haunted by a feeling of insecurity, and revealed a secret unrest and discontent of soul. But those around her were not offended at the completeness with which she belonged to a century representing the supremacy of the senses; the spiritual life that diffused itself over her form was a refinement of delight in physical pleasures; the blandishments of her manner, the smiles on her face, the flowers on her breast, covered fiery passions that coursed riotously through her veins.

Her first minister was Panin, without whom no council was held, no decision taken in foreign or domestic affairs. He alone could effectually promote her schemes of administrative greatness; though he was guided by experience rather than comprehensive views. With the faults of pride, inflexibility, and dilatoriness, he also had incorruptness; and he was acknowledged to be the fittest man for his post. At home, his political principles led him to desire some limitation of the power of the sovereign by a

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council of nobles; towards foreign powers he was free from rancor. It had been the policy of France to save Poland by stirring up Sweden and Turkey against Russia; yet Panin did not misjudge the relations of Russia to France. Nor was he blinded by love for England; he wanted no treaty with her except with stipulations for aid in the contingency of a war with the Ottoman Porte, and as that condition could not be obtained, he always declined her alliance. His weak side was vanity, and Frederic of Prussia was said to have chained him to his interests by frequent presents of small value, and autograph letters filled with delicate flatteries. But Panin was thoroughly a Russian statesman, and to win his favor Frederic submitted to promise subsidies against Turkey.

The British minister relied on the good-will of Alexis Orloff, who had been a principal person in raising Catharine to the throne; but his influence was on the wane, and his brother, who remained for about ten years her favorite concubine, had been recently superseded and dismissed from the court.

His successor was Potemkin, who, to the person of a Titan joined a resolute ambition, and a commanding will, that became terrible to the empress herself; so that when she dismissed him from her bed, she found herself more and more subject to his control in the administration. Never did a favorite rise so rapidly, but at this time he cultivated the greatest intimacy with Panin, whose opinion he professed to follow.

The indifference of the king of Prussia on the relation of England to her colonies, extended to the



court of Moscow, and the Russian ministers never spoke of the strife but as likely to end in American independence. Yet this coolness was not perceived by the British minister. One day Panin inquired of him the news; remembering his instructions, Gunning seized the moment to answer, that the measures in progress would shortly end the rebellion in America; then, as if hurried by excess of zeal to utter an idle, unauthorized speculation of his own, he asked leave to acquaint his king, that "in case the circumstances of affairs should render any foreign forces necessary, he might reckon upon a body of her imperial majesty's infantry." On the morning of the eighth of August, Panin reported the answer of the empress. Nothing was said specifically about troops; still less of placing Russian battalions under the command of a British general, or despatching them across the Atlantic; but she gave the strongest assurance of her entire readiness, from gratitude for favors received from England during her last war, upon this and upon every other occasion, to give the British king assistance, in whatever manner he thought proper. She charged Panin to repeat her very words, that "she found in herself an innate affection for the British nation which she should always cherish." The unobserving envoy drank in the words with delight; and interpreted a woman's lavish sentimentality as a promise of twenty thousand men to be forwarded from Asia and Eastern Europe to America. He flattered himself that he had conducted the negotiation with delicacy and success, and that the proposal, which was flying on the winds to other courts, was a secret to everybody but Panin and the empress.

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The reply to Bunker Hill from England reached Washington before the end of September; and the manifest determination of the ministers to push the war by sea and land with the utmost vigor, removed from his mind every doubt of the necessity of independence. Such, also, was the conclusion of Greene; and the army was impatient when any of the chaplains prayed for the king. The general congress had less sagacity. It should have assembled on the fifth of September; but for eight days more there were too few delegates for the transaction of business.

The whole province of Georgia was now represented, and henceforward the confederacy never embraced less than thirteen members. The war developed the germ of a state that was to include both slopes of the Green Mountains, whose people fought with the army of the continent under officers of their own election; but the pretensions of New York to jurisdiction over their territory forbade as yet their recognition as a separate political body.

From the new commonwealth which was rising on the west of Virginia, an agent soon presented himself. The adventurers in that region spread the fame of the healthfulness of its climate, the wonderful goodness of its ranges for all kinds of game, and the seemingly miraculous fertility of the soil where it was underlaid by limestone; and they already foretold the great city that was to rise at the falls of the Ohio. Their representative discussed in private the foundation on which the swiftly growing settlements of Kentucky should rest; and received advice from their northern well-wishers to reserve that "most agreeable country" exclusively for the free. The ter-

ritorial claim of Virginia barred against him the doors of congress, but the affection of the West flowed in a full current towards the Union.

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The "inexpressibly distressing" situation of Washington demanded instant and earnest attention; but the bias of the continental congress was to inactivity. The intercepted letters of John Adams, in which he had freely unbosomed his complaints of its tardiness, and had justly thrown blame on "the piddling genius," as he phrased it, of Dickinson, were approved by many; but Dickinson himself was unforgiving; wounded in his self-love and vexed by the ridicule thrown on his system, from this time he resisted independence with a morbid fixedness. He brushed past John Adams in the street without returning his salutation; and the New England statesman encountered also the hostility of the proprietary party and of social opinion in Philadelphia, and the distrust even of some of the delegates from the South. At times, an "unhappy jealousy of New England" broke forth; but when a member insinuated distrust of its people, "as artful and designing men, altogether pursuing selfish purposes," Gadsden, of South Carolina, said in their defence: "I only wish we would imitate, instead of abusing, them. I thank God we have such a systematic body of men, as an asylum that honest men may resort to in the time of their last distress, if driven out of their own states; so far from being under any apprehensions, I bless God there is such a people in America."

Harmony was maintained only by acquiescence in the policy of Dickinson. From Pittsburg, Lewis Morris of New York and James Wilson of Penn-

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sylvania, the commissioners, recommended an expedition to take Detroit: the proposal, after a full discussion, was rejected; but the invasion of Canada, by way of the Chaudière and of Isle aux Noix, was approved; and delegates from a convention of the several parishes of Canada would have been a welcome accession. Much time was spent in wrangling about small expenditures. The prohibition by parliament of the fisheries of New England, and the restriction on the trade of the southern colonies, went into effect on the twentieth of July: as a measure of counteraction, the ports of America should have been thrown open; but though secret directions were given for importing powder and arms from "the foreign West Indies," the committee on trade was not appointed till the twenty second of September; and then they continued day after day, hesitating to act. The prospect of financial ruin led De Hart, of New Jersey, to propose to do away with issuing paper money by the provincial conventions and assemblies; but no one seconded him. The boundary line between Virginia and Pennsylvania was debated; as well as the right of Connecticut to hold possession of Wyoming. The roll of the army at Cambridge had, from its first formation, borne the names of men of color; but as yet without the distinct sanction of legislative approval. On the twenty sixth, Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina, moved the discharge of all the negroes in the army, and he was strongly supported by many of the southern delegates; but the opposition was so powerful and so determined that "he lost his point."

At length, came a letter from Washington, imply-



ing his sense that the neglect of congress had brought matters in his army to a crisis. Not powder and artillery only were wanting, but fuel, shelter, clothing, provisions, and the soldiers' pay; and, while a great part of the troops were not free from mutiny, by the terms of their enlistment all of them, except the riflemen, were to be disbanded in December. For this state of things, congress could provide no adequate remedy. On the thirtieth of September, they therefore appointed Franklin, Lynch, and Harrison, a committee to repair to the camp, and, with the New England colonies and Washington, to devise a method for renovating the army.

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While the committee were on the way, Gage, on the tenth of October, embarked for England, bearing with him the large requirements of Howe, his successor, which he warmly seconded. The king, the ministers, public opinion in England, had made very free with his reputation; but, on his arrival, he was allowed to wear a bolder front than he had shown in Massachusetts, and was dismissed into retirement with the rank and emoluments of his profession. To Howe, the new commander-in-chief, the ministers had sent instructions, which permitted and advised the transfer of the war to New York; but, from the advanced state of the season, and the want of sufficient transports, he decided to winter at Boston, which place he did not doubt his ability to hold.

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On the fifteenth of October, the committee from congress arrived at the camp. Franklin, who was its soul, brought with him the conviction that the American people, though they might be made to suffer, could

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never be beaten into submission; that a separation from Britain was inevitable. His presence in the camp, within sight of his native town, was welcomed with affectionate veneration. "During the whole evening," wrote Greene, "I viewed that very great man with silent admiration." With Washington for the military chief, with Franklin for the leading adviser from congress, the conference with the New England commissioners, notwithstanding all difficulties, harmoniously devised a scheme for forming, governing, and supplying a new army of about twenty three thousand men, whom the general was authorized to enlist without delay. The proposed arrangements, in all their details, had the aspect of an agreement between the army, the continental congress, and the New England colonies; their successful execution depended on those four colonies alone.

After the conference broke up, the committee remained two days, to advise with the general on every unsettled question, and thus to establish a perfect understanding between him and the civil power. On this occasion Franklin confirmed that affection, confidence, and veneration, which Washington bore him to the last moment of his life. The committee were uncertain how to deal with Church, formerly an active member of the Boston committee, lately the director general of the hospital, a man of unsteady judgment, who had been discovered in a secret correspondence with the enemy in Boston: the extent of his indiscretion or complicity was uncertain; after an imprisonment for some months, he was allowed to pass to the West Indies; but the ship in which he sailed was never again heard of.

Franklin was still at the camp, when news from Maine confirmed his interpretation of the purposes of the British. In the previous May, Mowat, a naval officer, had been held prisoner for a few hours, at Falmouth, now Portland; and we have seen Linzee, in a sloop-of-war, driven with loss from Gloucester; it was one of the last acts of Gage to plan with the admiral how to wreak vengeance on the inhabitants of both those ports. The design against Gloucester was never carried out; but Mowat, in a ship of sixteen guns, attended by three other vessels, went up the harbor of Portland, and after a short parley, at half-past nine, on the morning of the sixteenth of October, he began to fire upon the town. In five minutes, several houses were in a blaze; parties of marines landed to spread the conflagration by hand. All sea-going vessels were burned except two, which were carried away. The cannonade was kept up till after dark; St. Paul's church, the public buildings, and about one hundred and thirty dwelling houses, three-fourths of the whole, were burned down; those that remained standing were shattered by balls and shells. By the English account, the destruction was still greater. At the opening of a severe winter, the inhabitants were turned adrift in poverty and misery. The wrath of Washington was justly kindled, as he heard of these "savage cruelties," this new "exertion of despotic barbarity." "Death and destruction mark the footsteps of the enemy," said Greene; "fight or be slaves is the American motto; and the first is by far the most eligible." Sullivan was sent to fortify Portsmouth; Trumbull, of Connecticut, took thought for the defence of New London.

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Meantime, the congress at Philadelphia was still halting in the sluggishness of irresolution; and, so long as there remained the dimmest hope of favor to its petition, the lukewarm patriots had the advantage. No court as yet had power to sanction "the condemnation of vessels taken from the enemy." On the third of October, one of the delegates of Rhode Island laid before Congress their instructions to use their whole influence for building, equipping, and employing an American fleet. It was the origin of our navy. The proposal met great opposition; but John Adams engaged in it heartily, and pursued it unremittingly, though "for a long time against wind and tide." On the fifth, Washington was authorized to employ two armed vessels to intercept British storeships, bound for Quebec; on the thirteenth, congress voted two armed vessels, of ten and of fourteen guns, and seventeen days later, two others of thirty six guns. But much time would pass before their equipment; as yet, war was not waged on the high sea, nor reprisals authorized, nor the ports opened to foreign nations.

On the sixteenth of October, the day on which Mowat anchored below Falmouth, the new legislature of Pennsylvania was organized. Chosen under a dread of independence, all of its members who were present subscribed the usual engagements of allegiance to the king. In a few days the Quakers presented an address, in favor of "the most conciliatory measures," and deprecating every thing "likely to widen or perpetuate the breach with their parent state." To counteract this movement, the committee for the city and liberties of Philadelphia, sixty six in number, headed



by George Clymer and McKean, went two by two to the state-house, and delivered their remonstrance; but the spirit of the assembly, under the guidance of Dickinson, followed the bent of the quakers.

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Congress, for the time, was like a ship at sea without a rudder, still buoyant, but rolling and tossing with every wave. One day would bring measures for the defence of New York and Hudson river, or for the invasion of Canada; the next, nothing was to be done that could further irritate Great Britain. The continuance of the army around Boston depended on the efficiency of all the New England provinces; of these, New Hampshire was without a government. On the eighteenth of October, her delegates asked in her behalf, that the general congress would sanction her instituting a government, as the only means of preventing the greatest confusion; yet the majority of that body let the month run out before giving an answer, for they still dreamed of conciliation, and of the good effects of their last petition to the king.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE QUESTION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND AMERICA.

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THE chronicler of manners and events can alone measure his own fairness, for no one else knows so well what he throws aside. The greatest poet of action has brought upon the stage the panorama of mortal being, without once finding occasion to delineate a faultless hero. No man that lives has not sinned. The gentlest of historians, recounting in the spirit of love the mighty deeds which divide the new civilization from the old, tells how one of his fellow messengers, thrice in the same night, denied the master by whom he had been called. Indiscriminate praise neither paints to the life, nor teaches by example, nor advances social science; history is no mosaic of funeral eulogies and family epitaphs, nor can the hand of truth sketch character without shadows as well as light. The crimes and the follies which stand in the line of causes of revolution, or modify the development of a state, or color the morals of an age,

must be brought up for judgment; and yet the humane student of his race, in his searches into the past, contemplates more willingly those inspirations of the beautiful and the good, which lift the soul above the interests of the moment, illustrate our affinity with something higher than ourselves, point the way to principles that are eternal, and constitute the vital element of progress.

From immeasurable distances in the material universe the observer of the stars brings back word, that the physical forces which rule our neighborhood maintain an all-pervading energy; and the records imbedded in the rocks, teaching how countless myriads of seasons have watched the sun go forth daily from his chamber, and the earth turn on its axis, and the sea ebb and flow, demonstrate that the same physical forces have exerted their power without change for unnumbered periods of bygone years. The twin sciences of the stars and of the earth establish the cosmical unity of the material universe in all that we can know of time and space. But the conception of the perfect order and unity of creation does not unfold itself in its beauty and grandeur, so long as the guiding presence of intelligence is not apprehended. From the depths of man's consciousness, which envelops sublimer truths than the firmament over his head can reveal to his senses, rises the idea of right; and history, testing that idea by observation, traces the vestiges of moral law through the practice of the nations in every age, proves experimentally the reality of justice, and confirms by induction the intuitions of reason.

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The historian, not less than philosophers and naturalists, must bring to his pursuit the freedom of an unbiassed mind; in his case the submission of reason to prejudice would have a deeper criminality; for he cannot neglect to be impartial without at once falsifying nature and denying providence. The exercise of candor is possible; for the world of action has its organization, and is obedient to law. The forces that constitute its antagonisms are very few, and are always and everywhere present, and are always and everywhere the same, though they make their appearance under many shapes. Human nature is forever identical with itself; and the state ever contains in its own composition all the opposite tendencies which constitute parties. The problems of politics cannot be solved without passing behind transient forms to efficient causes; the old theories, founded on the distinction of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, must give place to an analysis of the faculties in man, and the unvarying conditions, principles, and inherent wants out of which they have been evolved; and it will be found, that as every class of vertebrate animals has the forms of the same organs, so an exact generalization establishes the existence of every element of civil polity, and of the rudiments of all its possible varieties and divisions in every stage of human being.

Society is many and is one; and the organic unity of the state is to be reconciled with the separate existence of each of its members. Law which restrains all, and freedom which adheres to each individual, and the mediation which adjusts and connects these two conflicting powers, are ever present as constituent ingredients; each of which, in its due propor-



tion is essential to the well being of a state, and is ruinous when it passes its bounds. It has been said that the world is governed too much; no statesman has ever said that there should be no government at all. Anarchy is at one extreme, and the pantheistic despotism, which is the absorption of the people into one man as the sovereign, at the other. All governments contain the two opposite tendencies; and were either attraction or repulsion, central power or individuality, to disappear, civil order would be crushed or dissolved.

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The state has always for its life-giving principle the idea of right; the condition of facts can never perfectly represent that idea; and unless this antagonism also is reconciled, no durable constitution can be formed, and government totters of itself to its fall, or is easily overthrown. Here, then, is another cause of division; one party clings to the bequests of the past, and another demands reform; the fanatics for conservatism are met by enthusiasts for ideal freedom, while there is always an effort to bring the established order into a nearer harmony with the eternal law of justice. These principles have manifested their power in every country in every stage of its existence, and must be respected, or society will perish in chaotic confusion or a stagnant calm.

The duty of impartiality in accounting for political conflicts, is then made easy, if behind every party there lies what an English poet has called "an eternal thought," and if the generating cause of every party, past, or present, or hereafter possible, is a force which never disappears, which in its proper proportion is essential to the wellbeing of society, and which turns

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into a poison only in its excess. It may take a diversity of names as it comes into flower respectively among savages or the civilized, in kingdoms, in empires, or in republics; and yet every party has an honest origin in human nature and the necessities of life in a community.

To fail in impartiality with regard to men, is not merely at variance with right; it is also sure to defeat itself. The fame which shines only in an eclipse of that of others, is necessarily transitory; the eclipse soon passes away and the brighter light recovers its lustre. The fond biographer who constructs the road to the monument of his idol over the graves of the reputation of great men, will find the best part of his race refusing to travel it. Besides, superior merit, to be discerned, must be surrounded by the meritorious; the glory of the noblest genius of his age would be sacrificed by detraction from the ability of his antagonists, his competitors, and his associates. Real worth delights to be environed by the worthy; it is serene, and can be duly estimated only by the serene; the chord of human sympathy does not vibrate to eulogy that grates with malignity.

The idea of humanity, which, by its ever increasing clearness, furnishes the best evidence of the steady melioration of the race, teaches to judge with equity the reciprocal relations of states. The free development of all inherent powers is the common aim, and the acknowledgment of the universal right to that free development is the bond of unity. Between Britain and the new empire which she founded, the duty of impartiality belongs equally to the men of the two countries; but experience has shown that it is practised

with most difficulty by those of the parent land. The moral world knows only one rule of right; but men in their pride create differences among themselves. The ray from the eternal source of justice suffers a deflection, as it falls from absolute princes on their subjects, from an established church on heretics, from masters of slaves on men in bondage, from hereditary nobles on citizens and peasants, from a privileged caste on an oppressed one. Something of this perverseness of pride has prevailed in the metropolitan state towards its colonies; it is stamped indelibly on the statute book of Great Britain, where all may observe and measure its intensity. That same pride ruled without check in the palace, and was little restrained in the house of lords; it broke forth in the conduct of the administration and its subordinates; it tinged the British colonial state papers of the last century so thoroughly, that historians who should follow them implicitly as guides, would be as erroneous in their facts as the ministers of that day were in their policy. This haughty feeling has so survived the period of revolutionary strife, that to this day it sometimes hangs as a heavy bias on the judgment even of Englishmen professing liberal opinions. The Americans more easily recovered their equanimity. They intended resistance to a trifling tax and a preamble, and they won peace with liberty; the vastness of the acquisition effaced the remembrance of a transient attempt at oppression, and left no rankling discontent behind. The tone of our writers has often been deferentially forbearing; those of our countrymen who have written most fully of the war of our revolution, brought to their task no prejudices against England,

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and while they gladly recall the relations of kindred,  
no one of them has written a line with gall.

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Aug. Nor are citizens of a republic most tempted to evil speaking of kings and nobles; it takes men of the privileged class to scandalize their peers and princes without stint. The shameless slanders which outrage nature in the exaggerations of the profligacy of courts have usually originated within palaces, and been repeated by men of rank;—American writers have no motive to take them up; the land of equality recognises sovereigns and aristocrats as men, and places them under the protection of the tribunal of humanity.

The Americans, entering most reluctantly on a war with Britain, preserved an instinctive feeling, that the relations of affinity were suspended rather than destroyed; they held themselves called to maintain “the rights of mankind,” the liberties of the English people, as well as their own; they never looked upon the transient ministers who were their oppressors as the type of the parent country. The moment approaches when the king proclaimed his irrevocable decision; to understand that decision it is necessary to state precisely the question at issue.

The administration of numerous colonies, each of which had a representative government of its own, was conducted with inconvenience from a want of unity; in war, experience showed a difficulty in obtaining proportionate aid from them all; in peace, the crown officers were impatient of owing their support to the periodical votes of colonial legislatures. To remedy this seeming evil by a concentration of



power, James the Second usurped all authority over the country north of the Potomac, and designed to consolidate and govern it by his own despotic will.

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The revolution of 1688 restored to the colonies their representative governments, and the collision between the crown officers and the colonial legislatures was renewed; threats of parliamentary intervention were sometimes heard; but for nearly three quarters of a century no minister had been willing to gratify the pertinacious entreaties of placemen by disturbing America in the enjoyment of her liberties.

Soon after the accession of George the Third, the king, averse to governing so many prosperous and free and loyal colonies by consent, resolved, through the paramount power of parliament, to introduce a new colonial system, which Halifax, Bedford, and especially Charles Townshend, had matured, and which was to have sufficient vigor to control the unwilling. First: the charter governments were to be reduced to one uniform direct dependence on the king, by the abolition of the jurisdiction of the proprietaries in Maryland and Pennsylvania, and by the alteration or repeal of the charters of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Secondly: for the pay of the crown officers, the British parliament was to establish in each colony a permanent civil list, independent of the assemblies, so that every branch of the judicial and executive government should be wholly of the king's appointment and at the king's will. Thirdly: the British parliament was, by its own act of taxation, to levy on the colonies a revenue towards maintaining their military establishment. Townshend, as the head

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of the board of trade, was unfolding the plan in the house of commons just before Bute retired.

The execution of the design fell to George Grenville. Now Grenville conceived himself to be a whig of the straitest sect, for he believed implicitly in the absolute power of parliament, and this belief he regarded as the great principle of the revolution of 1688. He was pleased with the thought of moulding the whole empire into closer unity by means of parliamentary taxation; but he also preserved some regard for vested rights, and this forbade him to consent to a wilful abrogation of charters. The Americans complained to him that a civil list raised by the British parliament would reduce the colonial assemblies to a nullity; Grenville saw the justice of the objection, disclaimed the purpose, dropped that part of the plan also, and proposed to confine the use of the parliamentary revenue to the expenses of the military establishment. The colonists again interposed with the argument, that by the theory of the British constitution, taxation and representation are inseparable correlatives; to this Grenville listened, and answered, that the whole empire was represented collectively, though not distributively, in parliament as the common council; but that, as even in Britain some reform by an increase of the number of voters was desirable, so taxation of the colonies ought to be followed by a special colonial representation; and, with this theory of constitutional law, he passed the stamp act.

When a difference at court drove Grenville from office, his theory lost its importance, for no party in England or America undertook its support. The

new ministers by whom his colonial policy was to be changed, had the option between repealing the tax as an act of justice to the colonies, or repealing it as a measure of expediency to Britain. The first was the choice of Pitt, and its adoption would have ended the controversy; the second was that of Rockingham. He abolished the tax, and sent over assurances of his friendship; but his declaratory act established as the rule for the judiciary and the law of the empire, that the legislative power of parliament reached to the colonies in all cases whatsoever. This declaration opened the whole question of the nature of representation, and foreshadowed a revolution or peaceful reform in America and in England. In 1688 the assertion of the paramount power of parliament against a king who would have sequestered all legislative liberty, was a principle of freedom; but in the eighteenth century, the assertion of the absolute power of a parliament acting in concert with the king, was to frame an instrument of tyranny. The colonies denied the unqualified authority of a legislature in which they were not represented; and when they were told that they were as much represented as nine tenths of the people of Britain, the discussions which followed awakened the British people from that day to complain unceasingly of the inadequate composition of a parliament, in whose election nine tenths of them had no voice whatever.

The agitation of reform for England was long deferred; the question was precipitated upon America. In the very next year, Charles Townshend, resuming the system which he had advocated in the adminis-

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tration of Bute, proposed a parliamentary tax to be collected in America on tea, glass, paper, and painters' colors, and introduced the tax by a preamble, asserting that "it is expedient that a revenue should be raised in his majesty's dominions in America for defraying the charge of the administration of justice and support of civil government, and towards further defraying the expenses of defending the said dominions." Grenville had proposed taxes for the defence of the colonies; Townshend's preamble promised an ever increasing American civil list, independent of American assemblies, to be disposed of by ministers at their discretion for salaries, gifts, or pensions. Here lay the seeds of a grievance indefinite in its extent, taking from the colonies all control over public officers, and menacing an absolute government to be administered for the benefit of office holders, without regard to the rights, and liberties, and welfare of the people.

Just as Townshend had intrenched the system in the statute book, he died, and left behind him no great English statesman for its steadfast upholder; while the colonies were unanimous in resisting the innovation, and at once avoided the taxes by agreements to stop imports from Britain. The government gave way, and repealed all Townshend's taxes except on tea. Of that duty Lord North maintained that it was no innovation, but a reduction of the ancient duty of a shilling a pound to one of threepence only; and that the change of the place where the duty was to be collected, was no more than a regulation of trade to prevent smuggling tea from Holland. The state-



ment, so far as the tax was concerned, was unanswerable; but the sting of the tax act lay in its preamble: Rockingham's declaratory act affirmed the power of parliament in all cases whatsoever; Townshend's preamble declared the expediency of using that power to raise a very large colonial revenue. Still, collision was practically averted, for the Americans, in their desire for peace, gave up the importation of tea.

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At this the king, against the opinion of Lord North and of the East India Company, directed that company itself to export tea to America, and there to pay the duty, hoping that a low price would tempt Americans to buy. But the colonists would not suffer the tea to be exposed for sale; the crown officers yielded to their unanimous resistance, everywhere except at Boston, and there the tea was thrown overboard.

To close the port of Boston and require an indemnity for the East India Company's loss, was the advice of Hutchinson, and neither New York, nor Pennsylvania, nor Virginia would have supported a refusal to such a requisition; but the king and the Bedford party seized the occasion to carry into effect part of their cherished system, and changed by act of parliament the charter granted by William and Mary to Massachusetts. The object of the change was the compression of popular power in favor of the prerogative. The measure could bring no advantage to Britain and really had nothing to recommend it; to the people of Massachusetts and to the people of all the colonies, submission to the change seemed an acknowledgment of the absolute power of parliament

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over liberty and property in America. The people of Massachusetts resisted; the king answered: "Blows must decide." A congress of the colonies approved the conduct of Massachusetts; parliament pledged itself to the king. In 1773 a truce was possible; after the alteration of the charter of Massachusetts, in 1774, America would have been pacified by a simple repeal of obnoxious acts; in 1775, after blood had been shed at Lexington, some security for the future was needed.

British statesmen of all schools but Chatham's, affirmed the power of parliament to tax America; America denied that it could be rightfully taxed by a body in which it was not represented, for taxation and representation were inseparable. British politicians rejoined, that taxation was but an act of legislation; that, therefore, to deny to parliament the right of taxation, was to deny to parliament all right of legislation for the colonies, even for the regulation of trade. To this America made answer that, in reason and truth, representation and legislation are inseparable; that the colonies, being entitled to English freedom, were not bound by any act of a body to which they did not send members; that in theory the colonies were independent of the British parliament; but as they honestly desired to avoid a conflict, they proposed as a fundamental or an organic act their voluntary submission to every parliamentary diminution of their liberty which time had sanctioned, including the navigation acts and taxes for regulating trade, on condition of being relieved from every part of the new system of administration, and being secured

against future attempts for its introduction. Richard Penn, the agent of congress, was in London with its petition to the king, to entreat his concurrence in this endeavor to restore peace and union.

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

THE KING AND THE SECOND PETITION OF CONGRESS.

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, IN EUROPE.

NOVEMBER IN AMERICA—1775.

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THE zeal of Richard Penn appeared from his celerity. Four days after the petition to the king had been adopted by congress, he sailed from Philadelphia on his mission. He arrived in Bristol on the thirteenth of August, and made such speed that he was the next day in London. Joint proprietary of the opulent and rapidly increasing colony of Pennsylvania, of which he for a time was governor, long a resident in America, intimately acquainted with many of its leading statesmen, the chosen suppliant from its united delegates, an Englishman of a loyalty above impeachment or suspicion, he singularly merited the confidence of the government. But not one of the ministers waited on him, or sent for him, or even asked him, through subordinates, one single question about the state of the colonies. He could not obtain an opportunity of submitting a copy of the petition to Lord Dartmouth till the twenty first. The king, on whom neither the petition nor its bearer had the slightest



influence, would not see him. "The king and his cabinet," said Suffolk, "are determined to listen to nothing from the illegal congress, to treat with the colonies only one by one, and in no event to recognise them in any form of association."

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"The Americans," reasoned Sandwich, "will soon grow weary, and Great Britain will subject them by her arms." Haldimand, who had just arrived, owned that "nothing but force would bring them to reason." Resolvedly blind to consequences, George the Third scorned to dissemble, and eagerly "showed his determination," such were his words, "to prosecute his measures, and force the deluded Americans into submission." He chid Lord North for "the delay in framing a proclamation declaring them rebels, and forbidding all intercourse with them." He was happier than his minister: he had no misgivings that he could be in the wrong, or could want power to enforce his will. In his eyes the colonists who pleaded their rights against the unlimited supremacy of the king in parliament were false to the crown and the constitution, to religion, loyalty, and the law; to crush their spirit and punish their disobedience was a duty and a merit. The navigation acts, of which it began to be seen that the total repeal would not diminish British trade, were not questioned; the view of a revenue from America had dissolved; the unwise change in the charter of Massachusetts weakened the influence of the crown by irritating the people; the most perfect success in reducing the American colonies to unconditional submission, would have stained the glory of a nation whose great name was due to the freedom of its people, and would, moreover, have been dan-

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gerous, if not fatal, to its own liberties. Yet the word of the king would be irrevocable; for to whom else could the colonies look for mediation? Not to the landed aristocracy, which would not suffer the authority of parliament to be questioned; not to the electors, for they had just chosen a parliament, and thus exhausted their power; not to the city of Bristol, which bounded its political liberality by its commercial interests; not to the city of London, for with the unprincipled Wilkes as its lord mayor it could offer no support beyond a noisy remonstrance; not to the public opinion of England, for it never showed forbearance when her imperial supremacy was assailed.

The king made his decision without hesitation; and he wished the world to know that his will could not change. To render retreat impossible, on the twenty third of August, two days after the delivery of a copy of the petition of congress, he sent out a proclamation for suppressing rebellion and sedition. It set forth, that many of his subjects in the colonies had proceeded to open and avowed rebellion, by arraying themselves to withstand the execution of the law, and traitorously levying war against him. "There is reason," so ran its words, "to apprehend that such rebellion hath been much promoted and encouraged by the traitorous correspondence, counsels, and comfort of divers wicked and desperate persons within our realm;" not only all the officers civil and military, but all subjects of the realm, were therefore called upon to disclose all traitorous conspiracies, and to transmit to one of the secretaries of state "full information of all persons

who should be found carrying on correspondence with, or in any manner or degree aiding or abetting, the persons now in open arms and rebellion against the government within any of the colonies in North America, in order to bring to condign punishment the authors, perpetrators, and abettors of such traitorous designs."

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The irrevocable publication having been made, Penn and Arthur Lee were "permitted" on the first of September to present the original of the American petition to Lord Dartmouth, who promised to deliver it to the king; but on their pressing for an answer, "they were informed, that as it was not received on the throne, no answer would be given." Lee expressed sorrow at the refusal, which would occasion so much bloodshed; and the deluded secretary answered: "If I thought it would be the cause of shedding one drop of blood, I should never have concurred in it."

The proclamation, aimed at Chatham, Camden, Barré, and their friends, and at the boldest of the Rockingham party, even more than against the Americans, was read, but not with the customary ceremonies, at the Royal Exchange, where it was received with a general hiss.

The progress of these discussions was closely watched by the agents of France. Its ambassador, just after Penn's arrival, wrote of the king and his ministers to Vergennes: "These people appear to me in a delirium; that there can be no conciliation we have now the certainty;" "Rochford even assures me once more, that it is determined to burn the town of Boston, and in the coming spring to

CHAP. XLIX. transfer the seat of operations to New York. You  
 1775. may be sure the plan of these people is, by devas-  
 Aug. tations to force back America fifty years if they can-  
 not subdue it." Vergennes had already said: "The cabinet of the king of England may wish to make North America a desert, but there all its power will be stranded; if ever the English troops quit the borders of the sea, it will be easy to prevent their return."

Vergennes could not persuade himself that the British government should refuse conciliation, when nothing was demanded but the revocation of acts posterior to 1763; and in his incredulity he demanded of the ambassador a revision of his opinion. "I persist," answered De Guines, "in thinking negotiations impossible. The parties differ on the form and on the substance as widely as white and black. An English ministry in a case like this can yield nothing, for according to the custom of the country it must follow out its plan or resign. The only sensible course would be to change the administration. The king of England is as obstinate and as feeble as Charles the First, and every day he makes his task more difficult and more dangerous." Vergennes gave up his doubts, saying: "The king's proclamation against the Americans changes my views altogether; that proclamation cuts off the possibility of retreat; America or the ministers themselves must succumb."

Nov. In a few weeks the proclamation reached the colonies at several ports. Men said: "While America is still on her knees, the king aims a dagger at her heart." Abigail Smith, the wife of John Adams, was at the time in their home near the



foot of Penn Hill, charged with the sole care of their little brood of children ; managing their farm ; keeping house with frugality, though opening her doors to the houseless and giving with good will a part of her scant portion to the poor ; seeking work for her own hands, and ever busily occupied, now at the spinning wheel, now making amends for having never been sent to school by learning French, though with the aid of books alone. Since the departure of her husband for congress, the arrow of death had sped near her by day, and the pestilence that walks in darkness had entered her humble mansion ; she herself was still weak after a violent illness ; her house was a hospital in every part ; and such was the distress of the neighborhood, she could hardly find a well person to assist in looking after the sick. Her youngest son had been rescued from the grave by her nursing ; her own mother had been taken away, and, after the austere manner of her forefathers, buried without prayer. Woe followed woe, and one affliction trod on the heels of another. Winter was hurrying on ; during the day family affairs took off her attention, but her long evenings, broken by the sound of the storm on the ocean, or the enemy's artillery at Boston, were lonesome and melancholy. Ever in the silent night ruminating on the love and tenderness of her departed parent, she needed the consolation of her husband's presence ; but when, in November, she read the king's proclamation, she willingly gave up her nearest friend exclusively to his perilous duties, and sent him her cheering message : " This intelligence will make a plain path for you, though a dangerous one ; I could not join to-day in the petitions of our worthy pastor for a reconcilia-

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tion between our no longer parent state, but tyrant state, and these colonies. Let us separate; they are unworthy to be our brethren. Let us renounce them; and, instead of supplications, as formerly, for their prosperity and happiness, let us beseech the Almighty to blast their counsels, and bring to nought all their devices."

Her voice was the voice of New England. Under the general powers of commander, Washington, who had hired vessels, manned them with sea captains and sailors from his camp, and sent them to take vessels laden with soldiers or stores for the British army, now urged on congress the appointment of prize courts for the condemnation of prizes; the legislature of Massachusetts, without waiting for further authority, of themselves, in an act drawn by Elbridge Gerry to encourage the fitting out of armed vessels, instituted such tribunals.

"The king's silly proclamation will put an end to petitioning," wrote James Warren, the speaker, to Samuel Adams; "movements worthy of your august body are expected: a declaration of independence, and treaties with foreign powers."

Hawley was the first to discern through the darkness the coming national government of the republic, even while it still lay far below the horizon; and he wrote from Watertown to Samuel Adams: "The eyes of all the continent are fastened on your body, to see whether you act with firmness and intrepidity, with the spirit and despatch which our situation calls for; it is time for your body to fix on periodical annual elections—nay, to form into a parliament of two houses."

The first day of November brought to the general congress the king's proclamation, and definite rumors that the colonies were threatened with more ships of war and British troops, and Russians, Hanoverians, and Hessians. The burning of Falmouth was also known. The majority saw that the last hope of conciliation was gone; and while they waited for instructions from their several constituencies before declaring independence, they instantly acted upon the petitions of the colonies that wished to institute governments of their own. On the second in committee, on the third in the house, it was resolved: "That it be recommended to the provincial convention of New Hampshire, to call a full and free representation of the people, and that the representatives, if they think it necessary, establish such a form of government, as, in their judgment, will best produce the happiness of the people, and most effectually secure peace and good order in the province, during the continuance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the colonies." On the fourth the same advice was extended to South Carolina. Here was, indeed, the daybreak of revolution; two peoples were summoned to come together and create governments with a single view to their own happiness. A limit seemed to be set to the duration of the new system; but it was already the conviction of the majority that the dispute between Great Britain and the colonies could end only in a separation; so that the men of New Hampshire and of South Carolina were virtually instructed to give the example of assuming power for all future time.

The revolution plainly portended danger to the

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proprietary government of Pennsylvania. The legislature of that colony was in session ; it continued to require all its members to take and subscribe the old qualification appointed by law, which included the promise of allegiance to George the Third ; so that Franklin, though elected for Philadelphia through the Irish and the Presbyterians, would never take his seat. Dickinson had been returned for the county by an almost unanimous vote ; supported by patriots who still confided in his integrity, by loyalists who looked upon him as their last hope, by the Quakers who knew his regard for peace, by the proprietary party whose cause he had always espoused. Now was the crisis of his fame. That body, on the fourth, elected nine delegates to the continental congress. Of these one was too ill to serve ; of the rest, Franklin stood alone as the unhesitating champion of independence ; the majority remained to the last its opponents. It was known, that, two days after the American agents had sent to the secretary of state a copy of the second petition of congress, the king had issued his proclamation against the American insurgents and their abettors, in language which plainly included Dickinson as well as every other member of congress among the “dangerous and designing men,” rebels and traitors, whom the civil and military officers were ordered to “bring to justice ;” but with the bad logic of wounded vanity he shut his mind against the meaning of the facts ; and on the ninth he reported and carried these instructions to the Pennsylvania delegates : “We direct that you exert your utmost endeavors to agree upon and recommend such measures as you shall judge to afford the best prospect of



obtaining redress of American grievances, and restoring that union and harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, so essential to the welfare and happiness of both countries. Though the oppressive measures of the British parliament and administration have compelled us to resist their violence by force of arms, yet we strictly enjoin you, that you, in behalf of this colony, dissent from and utterly reject any propositions, should such be made, that may cause or lead to a separation from our mother country, or a change of the form of this government."

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The assembly which adopted these instructions sat always with closed doors, and did not even allow the names of the voters on the division to be recorded in their journal. Their act was in every way mischievous in its consequences: nothing could have been devised more completely in the interest of the British ministry, whose accusation that there existed in the continental congress a party for independence on insufficient grounds, appeared to be confirmed by high authority; it was also an intimation to the powers of the European continent, that the colonies were incurably divided. The influence of the measure was wide: Delaware was naturally swayed by the example of its more powerful neighbor; the party of the proprietary in Maryland took courage; in a few weeks the assembly of New Jersey, in like manner, held back the delegates of that province by an equally stringent declaration. Thus for five or six months the assembly of Pennsylvania blocked the way to effective measures, sowing broadcast the seeds

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of domestic discord, and preparing for Dickinson a life of regrets. Had it done no more than express its opposition to independence, a convention of the people would have soon been called, and the proprietary government suspended. To prevent this by a sufficiently plausible appearance of patriotism, it approved the military association of all who had no scruples about bearing arms, adopted rules for the volunteer battalions, and before its adjournment appropriated eighty thousand pounds in provincial paper money to defray the expenses of a military preparation. The insincerity of the concessions was perceived; extreme discontent led the more determined to expose through the press the trimming of the assembly; and Franklin encouraged Thomas Paine, an emigrant from England of the previous year, who was the master of a singularly lucid and attractive style, to write an appeal to the people of America in favor of independence.

Moreover the assembly in asserting the inviolability of the proprietary form of government, which had originally emanated from a king, placed itself in opposition to the principle of John Rutledge, John Adams, and the continental congress, that "the people are the source and original of all power." That principle had just been applied on the memorial of New Hampshire with no more than one dissenting vote. Yet the men of that day had been born and educated as subjects of a king; to them the house of Hanover was a symbol of religious toleration, the British constitution another word for the security of liberty and property under a representative government. They were not yet enemies of monarchy; they had as

yet turned away from considering whether well organized civil institutions could be framed for wide territories without a king; and in the very moment of resistance they longed to escape the necessity of a revolution. Zubly, a delegate from Georgia, a Swiss by birth, declared in his place "a republic to be little better than a government of devils," shuddered at the idea of a separation from Great Britain as fraught with greater evils than had yet been suffered, and fled from congress to seek shelter under the authority of the crown; but the courage of John Adams, whose sagacity had so soon been vindicated by events, rose with the approach of danger; he dared to present to himself the problem of the system best suited to the colonies in the sudden emergency, and guided by nature and experience, he looked for the essential elements of government behind its forms. He studied the principles of the British constitution not merely in the history of England, but as purified and reproduced in the governments of New England, and as analyzed and reflected in the writings of Montesquieu. "A legislative, an executive, and a judicial power comprehended the whole of what he meant and understood by government;" and as the only secret to be discovered was how to derive these powers directly from the people, he persuaded himself and succeeded in persuading others, that, by the aid of a convention, "a single month was sufficient, without the least convulsion or even animosity, to accomplish a total revolution in the government of a colony."

The continental congress perceived the wisdom of a declaration of independence; but they acquiesced in the necessity of postponing its consideration, till

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CHAP. there should be a better hope of unanimity. They  
XLIX. became more resolute, more thorough, and more  
1775. active; they recalled their absent members; they  
Nov. welcomed the trophies of victory sent by Montgomery from the northern army. In September they had appointed a secret committee to import gunpowder, field-pieces, and arms; now, without as yet opening the commerce of the continent by a general act, they empowered that committee to export provisions or produce to the foreign West Indies at the risk of the continent, in order to purchase the materials of war. They did not issue letters of reprisal against British property on the high seas; but in November they adopted "rules for the government of the American navy;" directed the enlistment of two battalions of marines; authorized the inhabitants of the colonies to seize all ships employed as carriers for the British fleet or army; and sanctioned tribunals instituted in the separate colonies to confiscate their cargoes. The captures already made under the authority of Washington they confirmed. To meet the further expenses of the war, they voted bills of credit to the amount of three millions more.

A motion by Chase of Maryland to send envoys to France with conditional instructions did not prevail; but on the twenty ninth of November, Harrison, Franklin, Johnson, Dickinson, and Jay were appointed a secret "committee for the sole purpose of corresponding with friends in Great Britain, Ireland, and other parts of the world;" and funds were set aside "for the payment of such agents as they might send on this service." "It is an immense mis-



fortune to the whole empire," wrote Jefferson to a refugee, "to have a king of such a disposition at such a time. We are told, and every thing proves it true, that he is the bitterest enemy we have; his minister is able, and that satisfies me that ignorance or wickedness somewhere controls him. Our petitions told him, that from our king there was but one appeal. The admonition was despised, and that appeal forced on us. After colonies have drawn the sword, there is but one step more they can take. That step is now pressed upon us by the measures adopted, as if they were afraid we would not take it. There is not in the British empire a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do; but, by the God that made me, I will cease to exist, before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British parliament propose; and in this I speak the sentiments of America." Yet Dickinson still soothed himself with the belief, that the petition of his drafting had not been rejected, and that proofs of a conciliatory disposition would be manifested in the king's speech at the opening of the session of parliament.

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## CHAPTER L.

HOW GEORGE THE THIRD FARED IN HIS BID FOR  
RUSSIANS.

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THE king's proclamation was a contemptuous defiance of the opposition, alike of the party of Rockingham and the party of Chatham, as the instigators, correspondents, and accomplices of the American rebels. Party spirit was exasperated and embittered, and Rochford was heard repeatedly to foretell, that before the winter should pass over, heads would fall on the block. "The king of England," said Wilkes, the lord mayor of London, in conversation at a public dinner, "hates me; I have always despised him: the time is come to decide which of us understands the other best, and in what direction heads are to fall." The French statesmen, who, with wonderful powers of penetration, analyzed the public men and their acts, but neither the institutions nor the people of England, complacently contrasted its seeming anarchy with their own happiness in "living peacefully under

a good and virtuous king." For a moment they thought that danger menaced George the Third himself, and that he was deficient in the greatness of character which his position required; but his fortitude was exemplary in difficulties, and he always bore adversity with a courage that would have become a righteous cause. Others might quail: he scoffed at the thought of an insurrection, though he stationed troops where riotous disorder was apprehended. "I know," said he, "what my duty to my country makes me undertake, and threats cannot prevent me from doing that to the utmost extent." A rumor prevailed that seven or eight members of the opposition would be sent to the tower of London; but this happened only to Stephen Sayre, an American by birth, a man of no political importance.

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Loyal addresses began to come in, to the joy of Lord North; but the king, from his fatal experience and his instincts, which, on the subject of despotic authority, were more true than those of any man in his cabinet, wished to avoid the appeal to popular opinion. For a time the public was united by the representation, that the insurrection in the colonies had been long premeditated with the deliberate design of achieving independence; and while that delusion lasted, the violent measures of coercion were acquiesced in "by a majority of individuals of all ranks and professions;" yet their countenance of the ministry was passive, without zeal, and unattended by a willingness to serve in America, so that the regiments could not be kept full by enlistments in Britain. The foreign relations of England became, therefore, of paramount importance.

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The secretary of state desired to draw from the French ambassador at London a written denial of Lee's assertion, that the Americans had a certainty of receiving support from France and Spain; but the intimation was evaded, for "the king of France would not suffer himself to be made an instrument to bend the resistance of the Americans." "If they should make us any application," said Vergennes, "we shall dismiss them politely, and we shall keep their secret."

Beaumarchais, who was then in England as an emissary from Louis the Sixteenth, and who from the charms of his conversation, his ability to write verses and to sing well, his generous style of living, and his apparent want of an official character, had opportunities of gaining information from the most various sources, encouraged the notion that England might seek to recover her colonies by entering on a war with France, and thus reviving their ancient sympathies. Having become acquainted with Arthur Lee, and having received accurate accounts of the state of America from persons newly arrived, he left London abruptly, ran over to Paris, and through De Sartine presented to the king a secret memorial in favor of taking part with the insurgents. "The Americans," said he, "are full of the enthusiasm of liberty, and resolve to suffer everything rather than yield; such a people must be invincible; all men of sense are convinced that the English colonies are lost for the mother country, and that is my opinion too."

On the twenty-second of September, the day after the subject was discussed in the council of the king, De Sartine put a new commission into the hands



of Beaumarchais. Vergennes continued to present America to his mind in every possible aspect. He found it difficult to believe, that the mistakes, absurdity, and passion of the British ministers could be so great as they really were; otherwise he never erred in his judgment. He received hints of negotiations for Russian troops; yet he held it impossible that the king of England should be willing to send foreign mercenaries against his own subjects. Henry the Fourth would not have accepted the aid of foreign troops to reduce Paris; their employment would render it in any event impossible to restore affectionate relations between the parent state and the colonies. Vergennes had not penetrated the character of the British government of his day, which, in the management of domestic affairs, was tempered by a popular influence, but which, in its foreign policy, consulted only the interests or the pride of the oligarchy, and was less capable of a generous impulse than that of France. The ministry did not scruple to engage troops wherever they chanced to be in the market.

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The hereditary prince of Hesse Cassel, who was already the ruler of the little principality of Hanau, had instinctively scented the wants of England, and written to George the Third: "I never cease to make the most ardent vows and prayers for the best of kings; I venture to offer, without the least condition, my regiment of five hundred men, all ready to sacrifice with me their life and their blood for your majesty's service. Deign to regard the motive and not the thing itself. Oh! that I could offer twenty thousand men to your majesty; it should be done with

CHAP. the same zeal; my regiment is all ready at the first  
 L. twinkle that shall be given me;" and like the beg-  
 1775 gar that sends his goods as a present to a rich patron  
 Sept. from whose charity he means to extort more than the  
 market price, he demanded nothing, but was now in  
 England to renew his solicitations.

The king wished leave to recruit in Holland, and also to obtain of that republic the loan of its so called Scottish brigade, which consisted no longer of Scots, but chiefly of Walloons and deserters. The consent of the house of Orange could easily have been gained; but the dignity, the principles, and the policy of the States General forbade. This is the first attempt of either party to induce Holland to take part in the American war; and its neutrality gave grievous offence in England.

Sir Joseph Yorke, at The Hague, was further directed to gain information on "the practicability of using the good dispositions of the king's friends upon the continent, and the military force which its princes might be engaged to supply." For England to recruit in Germany was a defiance of the law of the empire; but Yorke reported that recruits might be raised there in any number, and at a tolerably easy rate; and that bodies of troops might be obtained of the princes of Hesse Cassel, Würtemberg, Saxe Gotha, Darmstadt, and Baden.

But for the moment England had in contemplation a larger scheme. Gunning's private and confidential despatch from Moscow was received in London on the first day of September, with elation and delight. That very day Suffolk prepared an answer to the minister. To Catharine, George himself, "with his own hand

wrote a very polite epistle," requesting her friendly assistance: "I accept the succor that your majesty offers me of a part of your troops, whom the acts of rebellion of my subjects in some of my colonies in America unhappily require; I shall provide my minister with the necessary full powers; nothing shall ever efface from my memory the offer your imperial majesty has made to me on this occasion." Armed with this letter, Gunning was ordered to ask an audience of the empress, and to request of her the assistance of twenty thousand disciplined infantry, completely equipped, and prepared, on the opening of the Baltic in spring, to embark by way of England for Canada, where they were to be under the supreme command of the British general. The journey from London to Moscow, required about twenty three days; yet they were all so overweeningly confident, that they hoped to get the definitive promise by the twenty third of October, in season to announce it at the opening of parliament; and early in September Lord Dartmouth and his secretary hurried off messages to Howe and to Carleton, that the empress had given the most ample assurances of letting them have any number of infantry that might be wanted.

On the eighth, Suffolk despatched a second courier to Gunning, with a project of a treaty for taking a body of Russian troops into the pay and service of Great Britain. The treaty was to continue for two years, within which the king and his ministers were confident of crushing the insurrection. The levy money for the troops might be seven pounds sterling a man, payable one half in advance; the other half on embarkation. A subsidy was not to be refused. "I

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CHAP. will not conceal from you," wrote Suffolk to Gunning,  
L. "that this accession of force being very earnestly de-  
sired, expense is not so much an object as in ordinary  
1775. cases."  
Sept.

Scarcely had the project of a treaty left England, when, on the tenth of September, Gunning at court poured out to the empress assurances of the most inviolable attachment on the part of England. "Has any progress been made," asked the empress with the utmost coolness, "towards settling your dispute in America?" and without waiting for an answer, she added: "For God's sake put an end to it as soon as possible, and do not confine yourselves to one method of accomplishing this desirable end; there are other means of doing it than force of arms, and they ought all to be tried. You know my situation has lately been full as embarrassing, and, believe me, I did not rest my certainty of success upon one mode of acting. There are moments when we must not be too rigorous. The interest I take in everything that concerns you, makes me speak thus freely upon this subject."

"The measures which are pursuing to suppress the rebellion," answered Gunning, who found himself most unexpectedly put upon the defensive, "are such as are consistent with his majesty's dignity and that of the nation, and I am persuaded that your majesty would neither advise nor approve of any that were not so; resentment has not yet found its way into his majesty's councils." But Catharine only repeated her wishes for a speedy and a peaceful end to the difference; thus reading the king of England a lesson in humanity, and citing her own example of lenity and



concession as the best mode of suppressing a rebellion. CHAP.  
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Late on the twenty fourth, the first British courier reached Moscow a few hours after Catharine's departure for some days of religious seclusion in the monastery at Voskresensk, for she was scrupulous in her observance of the forms and usages of the Greek church. As no time was to be lost, Gunning went to Panin, who received him cordially, heard his communication without any sign of emotion, and consented to forward to the empress in her retirement a copy of the king's letter. He next repaired to the vice-chancellor Ostermann. It was the policy of the empire to preserve amicable relations with George the Third; the vice-chancellor, therefore, calmly explained the impossibility of conceding the request for troops; but the British envoy persisted in his urgency, and misinterpreting the self-possession and friendly manner of the Russian minister, deluded himself into the belief that the British requisition, if it should come to be a matter of debate, would be supported by his voice. 1775.  
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The empress having returned to Moscow, Gunning, at five in the afternoon of the thirtieth, waited on Panin, by appointment. The autograph letter, which he wished to deliver in person, said positively that she had made him an offer of troops; Panin denied that any such offer had been made, and after much expostulation, Gunning confessed: "It is true; in your answer to me no explicit mention was made of troops."

The message of the empress now was, that she was affected by the cordiality of the king, that in return, her friendship was equally warm, but that she had

CHAP. much repugnance to having her troops employed in  
 L. America. "And could not his majesty," asked Panin,  
 1775 "make use of Hanoverians?"  
 Sept.

Gunning replied at great length: "Will the refusal of troops be a suitable return for our conduct during the late war, for our having foregone the commercial advantages which the Porte would undoubtedly have granted us, could she only have obtained a real neutrality on our part, which our partiality for Russia prevented us from observing? Were not the king's harbors, his subjects, and the credit and influence of the nation at her service during the whole war? Did not his majesty, at the risk of a rupture with France and Spain, forbid those powers to molest the Russian fleet, which they would otherwise have annihilated? And though these services were rendered from the most pure and disinterested motives, yet as it has pleased the empress so frequently to express her wishes for an occasion of showing her sense of their merit, it is with the utmost astonishment I see her decline the present occasion of evincing it. I conjure you, by regard for the honor of your sovereign, to reflect on the light in which such a refusal must be looked upon by us, as well as by all the powers in Europe, and on the effect it might have on the conduct of some of them." And as he was refused an audience, he desired Panin himself to deliver the autograph letter of George the Third.

Oct. The next morning, Gunning went to Panin before he was up, and to remove objections, offered to be content with a corps of fifteen thousand men. At court, though it was the grand duke's birthday, he found that the empress would not appear. He re-

turned to the palace in the evening, but the empress, feigning indisposition, excused herself from seeing him.

Meantime the subject was debated in council, and objections without end rose up against the proposed traffic in troops, from the condition of the army wasted by wars, the divisions in Poland, the hostile attitude of Sweden, the dignity of the empress, the danger of disturbing her diplomatic relations with other European powers, the grievous discontents it would engender among her own subjects. She asked Panin whether granting the king such assistance would not disgust the British nation; and Ivan Ctzernichew, lately her ambassador at London, now minister of the marine, declared that it would give offence to the great body of the people of England, who were vehemently opposed to the policy of the king and his ministers.

Besides, what motive had the people of Russia to interfere against the armed husbandmen of New England? Why should the oldest monarchy of modern Europe, the connecting link between the world of antiquity and the modern world, assist to repress the development of the youngest power in the west? Catharine claimed to sit on the throne of the Byzantine Cæsars, as heir to their dignity and their religion; and how could she so far disregard her own glory, as to take part in the American dispute, by making a shambles of the mighty empire which assumed to be the successor of Constantine's? The requisition of England was marked by so much extravagance, that nothing but the wildest credulity of statesmanship could have anticipated success.

The first suggestion to Catharine that the king of

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CHAP. I. England needed her aid, was flattering to her vanity,  
and, supposing it had reference only to entanglements  
1775 in Europe, she was pleased with the idea of becoming  
the supreme arbiter of his affairs. But when the appli-  
cation came to be exhibited to her as a naked demand  
of twenty thousand men to be shipped to America,  
where they were to serve, under British command,  
not as auxiliaries but as mercenaries, with no liberty  
left to herself but to fix the price of her subjects in  
money and so plunge her hand as deeply as she  
pleased into the British exchequer, the offer was  
taken as an offence to her pride, and an insult to her  
honor. Using no palliatives she framed accordingly  
a sarcastic and unequivocal answer: "I am just be-  
ginning to enjoy peace, and your majesty knows that  
my empire has need of repose. It is also known  
what must be the condition of an army, though victo-  
rious, when it comes out of a long war in a murder-  
ous climate. There is an impropriety in employing  
so considerable a body in another hemisphere, under  
a power almost unknown to it, and almost deprived  
of all correspondence with its sovereign. My own  
confidence in my peace, which has cost me so great  
efforts to acquire, demands absolutely that I do not  
deprive myself so soon of so considerable a part of  
my forces. Affairs on the side of Sweden are but  
put to sleep, and those of Poland are not yet defin-  
itely terminated. Moreover, I should not be able  
to prevent myself from reflecting on the consequences  
which would result for our own dignity, for that of  
the two monarchies and the two nations, from this  
junction of our forces, simply to calm a rebellion  
which is not supported by any foreign power."



Every word of the letter of the king of England to the empress of Russia was in his own hand; she purposely employed her private secretary to write her answer. The second English courier, with the project of a treaty, reached Gunning on the fourth of October; he seized the earliest opportunity to begin reading it to Panin, and was willing to come down in his demand to ten thousand men; but the chancellor, interrupting him, put into his hands Catharine's answer, and declined all further discussion.

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The letter seemed to the British envoy in some passages exceptionable, and he was in doubt whether it was fit to be received; but suppressing his discontent, he forwarded it to his sovereign.

The conduct of this negotiation was watched with the intensest curiosity by every court from Moscow to Madrid, and its progress was well understood; but no foreign influence whatever, not even that of the king of Prussia, however desirous he might have been of rendering ill offices to England, had any share in determining the empress. The decision was founded on her own judgment and that of her ministers, on the necessities of her position and the state of her dominions. For a short time a report prevailed through western Europe, that the English request was to be granted; but Vergennes rejected it as incredible, and wrote to the French envoy at Moscow: "I cannot reconcile Catharine's elevation of soul with the dishonorable idea of trafficking in the blood of her subjects."

On the last day of October, the French minister asked Panin of the truth of the rumors, and Panin answered: "People have said so, but it is physically

CHAP. impossible ; besides, it is not consistent with the dig-  
L. nity of England to employ foreign troops against its  
1775 own subjects."  
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The empress continued to be profuse of courtesies to Gunning ; and when in December he took his leave, she renewed the assurances of affection and esteem for his king, whom she expressed her readiness to assist on all occasions, adding, however : " But one cannot go beyond one's means."

## CHAPTER LI.

PARLIAMENT IS AT ONE WITH THE KING.

OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 1775.

“WHEN the Russians arrive, will you go and see their camp?” wrote Edward Gibbon to a friend. “We have great hopes of getting a body of these barbarians; the ministers daily and hourly expect to hear that the business is concluded; the worst of it is, the Baltic will soon be frozen up, and it must be late next year before they can get to America.” The couriers that, one after another, arrived from Moscow, dispelled this confidence. The king was surprised by the refusal of the empress of Russia, and found fault with her manner as not “genteel;” for, said he, “she has not had the civility to answer me in her own hand; and has thrown out expressions that may be civil to a Russian ear, but certainly not to more civilized ones.” Yet he bore the disappointment with his wonted firmness; and turned for relief to the smaller princes of Germany, who now, on the failure of his

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CHAP. great speculation, had the British exchequer at their  
LI. mercy.

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The plan of the coming campaign was made in the undoubting expectation of completely finishing the war in season to disband the extraordinary forces within two years. For the Russians, who were to have protected the city and province of Quebec, Germans were to be substituted, whatever might be the cost. The advantage of keeping possession of Boston as a means of occupying the attention of New England, was considered; but it was determined to concentrate the British forces at New York, as the best means of securing the central provinces and the connection with Canada. The vaunts of Dunmore were so far heeded, that a small force of some hundred men was held sufficient, with the aid of loyalists and negroes, to recover the province. The promises of Martin led to the belief that, on the appearance of a few regiments, the Highland emigrants and many thousands in the back counties of North Carolina would rally round the royal standard; and in consequence, five regiments of infantry, with ten thousand stand of arms, six small field pieces, two hundred rounds of powder and ball for each musket and field piece, were ordered to be in readiness to sail from Cork early in December; and this force was soon after made equal to seven regiments. "I am not apprized where they are going," thus Barrington expostulated with Dartmouth; "but if there should be an idea of such a force marching up the country, I hope it will not be entertained. Allow me once more to remind you of the necessity there is in all military matters, not to stir a step without full consultation of able




military men, after giving them the most perfect knowledge of the whole matter under consideration, with all its circumstances." The warning had no influence, for the king, in his dauntless self-will, would not consult those who were likely to disagree with him. A naval force, equal to the requirements of the governor of South Carolina for the recovery of that province, was also prepared.

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Of the hearty concurrence of parliament no doubt was harbored. "I am fighting the battle of the legislature," said the king; "I therefore have a right to expect an almost unanimous support; I know the uprightness of my intentions and am ready to stand any attack of ever so dangerous a kind."

The good sense of the English people reasoned very differently, and found an organ among the ministers themselves. The duke of Grafton, by letter, entreated Lord North to go great lengths to bring about a durable reconciliation, giving as his reasons that "the general inclination of men of property in England differed from the declarations of the congress in America little more than in words; that many hearty friends to government had altered their opinions by the events of the year; that their confidence in a strong party among the colonists, ready to second a regular military force, was at an end; that if the British regular force should be doubled, the Americans, whose behavior already had far surpassed every one's expectation, could and would increase theirs accordingly; that the contest was not only hopeless, but fraught with disgrace; that the attendant expenses would lay upon the country a burden which nothing could justify but an insult from a for-

CHAP. <sup>LI.</sup>  eign enemy ; that, therefore, the colonies should be invited by their deputies to state to parliament their wishes and expectations, and a truce be proclaimed, until the issue should be known." Of this communication Lord North took no note whatever until within six days of the opening of parliament, and then replied by enclosing a copy of the intended speech.

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Hastening to court, Grafton complained of the violent, injudicious, and impracticable schemes of the ministers, framed in a misconception of the resources of the colonies ; and he added : " Deluded themselves, they are deluding your majesty." The king debated the business at large ; but when he announced that a numerous body of German troops was to join the British forces, Grafton answered earnestly : " Your majesty will find too late that twice the number will only increase the disgrace, and never effect the purpose."

On the twenty sixth of October, two days after the refusal of the empress of Russia was known, the king met the parliament. Of the many who were to weigh his words spoken on that occasion, the opinion of those not present was of the most importance. Making no allusion whatever to the congress or to its petition, he charged the people in America with being in a state of openly avowed revolt, levying a rebellious war for the purpose of establishing an independent empire ; he professed to have received the most friendly offers of foreign assistance ; and he announced that he had garrisoned Gibraltar and Port Mahon with his electoral troops, in order to employ the former garrisons in America. To make

a speedy end of the disorders by most decisive exertions, he recommended an increase of the navy and the army; at the same time he proposed to send over commissioners with power to grant pardons and receive the submission of the several colonies. Thus the speech, which in its words and its effects was irrevocable, presented a false issue. The Americans had not designed to establish an independent government; of their leading statesmen it was the desire of Samuel Adams alone; they had all been educated in the love and admiration of constitutional monarchy, and even John Adams and Jefferson so sincerely shrunk back from the attempt at creating another government in its stead, that, to the last moment, they were most anxious to avert a separation, if it could be avoided without a loss of their inherited liberties.

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The house of commons took the king at his word; Acland, who moved the address, reduced the question into a very short compass: "Does Britain choose to acquiesce in the independence of America, or to enforce her submission?" Lyttelton, whom we have seen as governor of South Carolina, in seconding the address, explained the inherent weakness of the southern colonies; and with obvious satisfaction intimated that, "if a few regiments were sent there, the negroes would rise, and imbrue their hands in the blood of their masters. He was against conciliatory offers; the honor of the nation required coercive measures; the colonies ought to be conquered before mercy should be shown them." The house sustained these sentiments by a vote of two hundred and seventy eight against one hundred and ten.

On the report of the address, the debate was re-

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newed. "If we suffer by the war," said Lord North, "the Americans will suffer much more. Yet," he added, "I wish to God, if it were possible, to put the colonies on the same footing they were in 1763." His seeming disinclination to the measures of his own ministry, justly drew on him a rebuke from Fox for not resigning his place. "The present war," argued Adair at length, "is unjust in its commencement, injurious to both countries in its prosecution, and ruinous in its event, staking the fate of a great empire against a shadow. The quarrel took its rise from the assertion of a right, at best but doubtful in itself; a right, from whence the warmest advocates for it have long been forced to admit that this country can never derive a single shilling of advantage. The Americans, it is said, will be satisfied with nothing less than absolute independence. They do not say so themselves; they have said the direct contrary: 'Restore the ancient constitution of the empire, under which all parts of it have flourished; place us in the situation we were in the year sixty three, and we will submit to your regulations of commerce, and return to our obedience and constitutional subjection:' this is the language of the Americans. Our ministers tell us they will not in truth be content with what they themselves have professed to demand. Have you tried them? Make the experiment. Take them at their word. If they should recede from their own proposals, you may then have recourse to war, with the advantage of a united, instead of a divided people at home." Sir Gilbert Elliot was unwilling "to send a large armament to America, without sending at the same time terms of



accommodation." "I vote for the address," said Rigby, "because it sanctifies coercive measures. America must be conquered, and the present rebellion must be crushed, ere the dispute will be ended." The commons unhesitatingly confirmed their vote of the previous night.

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Among the lords, Shelburne insisted that the petition of the congress furnished the fairest foundation for an honorable and advantageous accommodation; and he bore his testimony to the sincerity of Franklin as one whom "he had long and intimately known, and had ever found constant and earnest in the wish for conciliation upon the terms of ancient connection." His words, which were really a prophecy of peace and a designation of its mediators, were that night unheeded; and he was overborne by a majority of two to one. Some of the minority entered their protest, in which they said: "We conceive the calling in foreign forces to decide domestic quarrels, to be a measure both disgraceful and dangerous."

That same day the university of Oxford, the favored printer of the translated Bible for all whose mother tongue was the English, the natural guardian of the principles and the example of Wickliffe and Latimer and Ridley and Cranmer, the tutor of the youth of England, addressed the king against the Americans as "a people who had forfeited their lives and fortunes to the justice of the state."

On the last day of October, Lord Stormont, the British ambassador in France, who had just returned to his post, was received at court. The king of France, whose sympathies were all on the side of monarchical power, said to him: "Happily the opposition party is

CHAP. now very weak." From the king, Stormont went to  
 LI. Vergennes, who expressed the desire to live in perfect  
 1775. harmony with England; "far from wishing to increase  
 Oct. your embarrassments," said he, "we see them with some  
 uneasiness." "The consequences," observed Stormont,  
 "cannot escape a man of your penetration and extensive  
 views." "Indeed they are very obvious," responded  
 Vergennes; "they are as obvious as the consequences  
 of the cession of Canada. I was at Constantinople  
 when the last peace was made; when I heard its con-  
 ditions, I told several of my friends there, that Eng-  
 land would ere long have reason to repent of having  
 removed the only check that could keep her colonies  
 in awe. My prediction has been but too well verified.  
 I equally see the consequences that must follow the  
 independence of North America, if your colonies  
 should carry that point, at which they now so visibly  
 aim. They might, when they pleased, conquer both  
 your islands and ours. I am persuaded that they  
 would not stop there, but would in process of time  
 advance to the southern continent of America, and  
 either subdue its inhabitants or carry them along  
 with them, and in the end not leave a foot of that  
 hemisphere in the possession of any European power.  
 All these consequences will not indeed be immediate.  
 Neither you nor I shall live to see them; but for be-  
 ing remote they are not less sure."

Nov. The moderate men among British statesmen saw  
 no less clearly that the king's policy was forcing in-  
 dependence upon the colonies. On the first of No-  
 vember the Duke of Manchester said to the lords;  
 "The violence of the times has wrested America  
 from the British crown, and spurned the jewel be-

cause the setting appeared uncouth ;” but the debate which he opened had no effect except that Grafton took part with him, and as a consequence resigned his place as keeper of the privy seal. Every effort of the opposition was futile. On the tenth of November Richard Penn was called to the bar of the house of lords, where he bore witness in great detail to the sincerity of the American congress in their wish for conciliation, and to the unanimity of support which they received from the people. Under the most favorable auspices the duke of Richmond proposed to accept the petition from that congress to the king as a ground for conciliation ; he was ably supported by Shelburne ; but his motion, like every similar motion in either house, was negatived by a majority of about two to one.

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On the same day, the definitive ministerial changes, which were to give a character to the whole war, were completed. Rochford retired on a pension, and his place was taken by Lord Weymouth, who greatly surpassed him in ability and resolution. Dartmouth, who was mild tempered, amiable, and pure, yet weak, ignorant, and narrow, one of the best disposed of British statesmen, yet one whose hand was set to the most cruel and most arbitrary measures, exchanged his seat in the cabinet for the privy seal, consoling himself with the belief that he had been ever laboring for conciliation, while in fact he had been sanctioning and executing the policy which he professed to abhor. The seals of the American department were transferred to Lord George Sackville Germain, who owed his selection to his speech in the house of commons on the twenty eighth of March, 1774, and who came into



CHAP. office on the condition of his enforcing the measures  
LI. recommended in that speech.

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Germain stood before Europe as a cashiered officer, disgraced for cowardice on the field of battle; and his unquestioning vanity made him eager to efface his ignominy by a career that should rival that of Pitt in the Seven Years' war. Haunted by corroding recollections, he stumbled like one in the dark as he struggled to enter the temple of fame, and eagerly went about knocking for admission at every gate but the right one. He owed his rehabilitation to Rockingham, to whom he instantly proved false; Chatham would never sit with him at the council board. His career was unprosperous, from causes within himself. His powers were very much overrated; he had a feverish activity, punctuality to a minute, and personal application, but no sagacity, nor quickness or delicacy of perception, nor soundness of judgment. He wanted altogether that mastery over others which comes from warmth of heart. Minutely precise and formal, he was a most uncomfortable chief, always throwing upon the officers under his direction the fault of failure even in impossible schemes. His rancor towards those at whom he took offence was bitter and unending. His temper was petulant; his selfish passions were violent and constant, yet petty in their objects. Apparelled on Sunday morning in gala, as if for the drawing room, he constantly marched out all his household to his parish church, where he would mark time for the singing gallery, chide a rustic chorister for a discord, stand up during the sermon to survey the congregation or overawe the idle, and with unmoved sincerity gesticulate approbation to the



preacher, or cheer him by name. Though smooth and kindly to his inferiors and dependents, he was capable of ordering the most relentless acts of cruelty; could rebuke his generals for checking savages in their fury as destroyers; and at night, on coming home to his supper and his claret, the friendless man, unloving and unloved, could, with cold, vengeful malice, plan how to lay America in ashes, if he could not have the glory of reducing her to submission.

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Germain's appointment shows how little the sympathies of the English people were considered; the administration, as it was now constituted, was the weakest, the least principled, and the most unpopular of that century. The England that the world revered, the England that kept alive in Europe the vestal fire of freedom, was at this time outside of the government, though steadily gaining political strength. "Chatham, while he had life in him, was its nerve." Had Grenville been living, it would have included Grenville; it retained Rockingham, Grenville's successor; it had now recovered Grafton, Chatham's successor; and Lord North, who succeeded Grafton, sided with Germain and Sandwich only by spasms, and though he loved his place, was more against his own ministry than for it. The king's policy was not in harmony with the England of the Revolution, nor with that of the eighteenth century, nor with that of the nineteenth. The England of to-day, which receives and brightens and passes along the torch of liberty, has an honest lineage, and springs from the England of the last century; but it had no representative in the ministry of Lord North, or the majority of the fourteenth parliament. America would right herself within a year; Britain and Ireland must wait more than a half century.

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How completely the ministry were stumbling along without a policy, appeared from the debates. On the eighth, Lord Barrington asked of the house in a committee of supply an appropriation for twenty five thousand men to be employed in America, and said, with the authority of a minister: "The idea of taxing America is entirely given up; the only consideration is, how to secure the constitutional dependency of that country. The general plan adopted by administration is, first to arm, and then send out commissioners."

13.

This explicit renunciation of American taxes startled the landed gentry, for whom a reduction of a shilling in the pound of the land-tax was to have been the first-fruits of their support of the American measures. When Lord North, on the thirteenth, in a committee of supply moved the full tax of four shillings in the pound on land, he had to encounter and overcome the rankling discontent of those who remembered the remarks of Barrington, and he spoke in this wise: "When his majesty's ministers said, that the idea of taxation was abandoned, they never intended by that expression more, than that it is abandoned for the present; that taxation is but a matter of secondary consideration, when the supremacy and legislative authority of this country are at stake. Taxation is not nor ever was out of their view. It should be insisted on, and enforced, to insure your legislative authority, though no kind of advantage should arise from it." The explanation gave satisfaction; Lord North retained the support of the landholders, by a sacrifice of his opinions, and with them of America.

16.

On the sixteenth, Burke brought forward a bill for

composing the existing troubles by renouncing the pretension to an American revenue. "If we are to have no peace," replied Germain, "unless we give up the right of taxation, the contest is brought to its fair issue. I trust we shall draw a revenue from America; the spirit of this country will go along with me in the idea to crush rebellious resistance."

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As he said this, the orders were already on the way to hire troops of the roytelets of Brunswick and Hesse Cassel, and, in defiance of the laws of the empire, to raise four thousand recruits in Germany; for if Germain was to crush the Americans, it could not be done by Englishmen. The ministry was the master of parliament, but not of the affections of the English people.

Still less did the ministry possess the hearts of the people of Ireland; though it controlled a majority of her legislature, and sought to allay discontent by concessions in favor of her commerce and manufactures. The consent of the Irish house of commons was requested to sending four thousand of the troops on the Irish establishment to America, and receiving in their stead four thousand German Protestants. "If we give our consent," objected Ponsonby, in the debate on the twenty fifth of November, "we shall take part against America, contrary to justice, to prudence, and to humanity." "The war is unjust," said Fitzgibbon, "and Ireland has no reason to be a party therein." Sir Edward Newenham could not agree to send more troops to butcher men who were fighting for their liberty; and he reprobated the introduction of foreign mercenaries as equally militating against true reason and sound policy. "If men must be sent to America," cried George Ogle, "send there foreign mercenaries,



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not the brave sons of Ireland." Hussey Burgh condemned the American war as "a violation of the law of nations, the law of the land, the law of humanity, the law of nature; he would not vote a single sword without an address recommending conciliatory measures; the ministry, if victorious, would only establish a right to the harvest when they had burned the grain." Yet the troops were voted by one hundred and twenty one against seventy six, although the resolution to replace them by foreign Protestants was negatived by sixty eight against one hundred and six.

Dec.

The majority in parliament did not quiet Lord North. Sir George Saville describes him "as one day for conciliation; but as soon as the first word is out, he is checked and controlled, and instead of conciliation out comes confusion." On the first day of December, he pressed to a second reading the American prohibitory bill, which consolidated the three special acts against the port of Boston, the fisheries, and the trade of the southern colonies, and enlarged them into a prohibition of all the trade of all the thirteen colonies. American vessels and goods were made the property of their captors; the prisoners might be compelled to serve the king even against their own countrymen. No one American grievance was removed; but commissioners were to be appointed to accept the submission of the colonies, or parts of colonies, one by one; with power to grant pardons to individuals or to a whole community in the lump. The atrocity of the measure was exposed in the house of commons, but without effect; on the third reading, in the house of lords, Mansfield explained his own views, which in their essential features were also those of the king: "The people of America are as much bound to



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obey the acts of the British parliament as the inhabitants of London and Middlesex. I have not a doubt in my mind, that ever since the peace of Paris the northern colonies have been meditating a state of independence on this country. But allowing that all their professions are genuine, that every measure hitherto taken to compel submission to the parliamentary authority of this country was cruel and unjust, yet what, my lords, are we to do? Are we to rest inactive with our arms across, till they shall think proper to begin the attack, and gain strength to do it with effect? We are now in such a situation that we must either fight or be pursued. As a Swedish general said to his men of their enemy, 'If you do not kill them, they will kill you;' if we do not, my lords, get the better of America, America will get the better of us. Are we to stand idle, because we are told this is an unjust war? I do not consider who was originally in the wrong; we are now only to consider where we are. The justice of the cause must give way to our present situation; and the consequences which must ensue should we recede, would, nay must be, infinitely worse, than any we have to dread by pursuing the present plan, or agreeing to a final separation." After these words the bill was adopted without a division.

From the beginning of the troubles, George the Third had regarded the renunciation of the colonies as preferable to the continuance of the connection on the American principles; for such a continuance would have overturned or endangered his system of government at home. To him it was an option between losing the brightest jewel in his crown, and losing the crown itself in so far as it was an emblem of monarch-

CHAP. ical power. The same consideration animated Fox  
 II. and Rockingham to defend American liberty as the  
 1775. bulwark of the rights of the British people. If a  
 cordial reconciliation should not be speedily effected,  
 to lose America entirely seemed to them a less evil  
 than to hold her as a conquered country; for the  
 maintaining of that dominion by an army only would  
 inevitably terminate in the downfall of the consti-  
 tution.

Outside of parliament, the most intelligent among  
 the philosophers of North Britain yielded to the  
 ministerial measures a reluctant acquiescence or dis-  
 countenanced them by open rebuke. The lukewarm  
 Presbyterian, William Robertson, whose smooth style  
 in his more elaborate pages is like satin without a  
 crease, and whose discreet method in history palliated  
 or veiled the enormities of the Spaniards, forgot how  
 well he had written at the time when the men in  
 power were repealing the stamp act. "If the wis-  
 dom of government could now terminate the contest  
 with honor instantly," he thought "that would be  
 the most desirable issue;" but yet he would have the  
 British "leaders at once exert the power of the British  
 empire in its full force." He would even have ap-  
 proved stationing a "few regiments in each capital."  
 He was certain that the Americans had been aiming  
 all along at independence, and like the Bedford party  
 in parliament, he held it fortunate that matters had  
 so soon been brought to a crisis. As a lover of man-  
 kind, he was ready to bewail the check to prosperous  
 and growing states; but, said he, "we are past the  
 hour of lenitives and half exertions."

On the other hand, John Millar, the professor  
 of law in the university of Glasgow, taught the

youth of Scotland who frequented his lectures, "that the republican form of government is by far the best, either for a very small or a very extensive country." CHAP.  
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"I cannot but agree with him," said David Hume, who yet maintained that it would be "most criminal" to disjoint the established government in Great Britain, where he believed a republic would so certainly be the immediate forerunner of despotism, that none but fools would think to augment liberty by shaking off monarchy. He had written the history of England without love for the country, or comprehension of its early popular liberty, or any deep insight into its parties, or exact study of its constitution. He that reads his lucid and attractive pages will not learn from them the formation of the "native English" tongue, or of the system of English government, or of religious opinion, or of English philosophy, or of English literature; his work is the work of a sceptic, polemic against the dogmatism of the church, otherwise unbiassed except by the skeptic's natural predilection for the monarchical principle. But he had no faith in the universal application of that principle. "The ancient republics," said he, rising above the influence of his philosophy, "were somewhat ferocious and torn by bloody factions; but they were still much preferable to the ancient monarchies or aristocracies, which seem to have been quite intolerable. Modern manners have corrected this abuse; and all the republics in Europe, without exception, are so well governed, that one is at a loss to which we should give the preference." "I am an American in my principles, and wish we would let them alone to govern or misgovern themselves, as they think prop-



CHAP. er ; the affair is of no consequence, or of little conse-  
II. quence, to us."

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But one greater than Robertson and wiser than Hume gave the best expression to the mind of Scotland. Adam Smith, the peer and the teacher of statesmen, enrolled among the servants of humanity and benefactors of our race, one who had closely studied France as well as Britain, and who in his style combined the grace and the clearness of a man of the world with profound wisdom and the sincere search for truth, applied to the crisis those principles of freedom and right which made Scotland, under every disadvantage of an oppressive form of feudalism and a deceitful system of representation, an efficient instrument in promoting the liberties of mankind. He would have the American colonies either fairly represented in parliament, or independent. The prohibitory laws of England towards the colonies he pronounced "a manifest violation of the most sacred rights," "impertinent badges of slavery imposed upon them without any sufficient reason by the groundless jealousy of the merchants and manufacturers of the mother country." "Great Britain," said he, "derives nothing but loss from the dominion she assumes over her colonies." "It is not very probable that they will ever voluntarily submit to us; the blood which must be shed in forcing them to do so is every drop of it the blood of those who are or of those whom we wish to have for our fellow citizens." "They are very weak who flatter themselves that in the state to which things are come, our colonies will be easily conquered by force alone." And he pointed out the vast immediate and continuing advantages



which Great Britain would derive, if she "should voluntarily give up all authority over her colonies, and leave them to elect their own magistrates, to enact their own laws, and to make peace and war as they might think proper." CHAP.  
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Josiah Tucker, an English royalist writer on political economy, had studied perseveringly the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, in their application to commerce; and at the risk of being rated a visionary enthusiast, he now sought to convince the landed gentry, that Great Britain would lose nothing if she should renounce her colonies and cultivate commerce with them as an independent nation. This he enforced with such strength of argument and perspicuity of statement, that Soame Jenyns wrote verses in his praise, and Mansfield approved his treatise.

Thus rose through the clouds of conflict and passion the cheering idea, that the impending change, which had been deprecated as the ruin of the empire, would bring no disaster to Britain. American statesmen had struggled to avoid a separation, which neither the indefatigable zeal of Samuel Adams, nor the eloquence of John Adams, nor the sympathetic spirit of Jefferson, could have brought about. The king was the author of American independence. His several measures, as one by one they were successively borne across the Atlantic—his contempt for the petition of congress, his speech to parliament, his avowed negotiations for mercenaries, the closing the ports of all the thirteen colonies and confiscating all their property on the ocean—forced upon them the conviction that they must protect and govern themselves.

## CHAPTER LII.

### THE CAPTURE OF MONTREAL.

AUGUST—NOVEMBER, 1775.

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WHEN Carleton heard of the surrender of Ticonderoga to Allen and Arnold, he resolved to attempt its recovery. The continental congress had, on the first of June, explicitly disclaimed the purpose of invading Canada; and a French version of their resolution was very widely distributed among its inhabitants. But on the ninth of that month the governor of the province proclaimed the American borderers to be a rebellious band of traitors, established martial law, and summoned the French peasantry to serve under the old colonial nobility, while the converted Indian tribes and the savages of the northwest were instigated to take up the hatchet against New York and New England. These movements affected the intentions of congress, and made the occupation of Canada an act of self-defence. .

The French nobility, of whom many under the Quebec act were received into the council or ap-

pointed to executive offices, and the Catholic clergy who were restored to the possession of their estates and their tithes, acquiesced in the new form of government; but by a large part of the British residents it was detested, as at war with English liberties, and subjecting them to arbitrary power. The instincts of the Canadian peasantry inclined them to take part with the united colonies: they denied the authority of the French nobility as magistrates, and resisted their claim of a right as seigniors to command their military services. Without the hardihood to rise of themselves, they were willing to welcome an invasion.

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Carleton, in his distress, appealed to the Catholic bishop. That prelate, who was a stipendiary of the British king, sent a mandate to the several parishes, to be read by the subordinate clergy after divine service, but the peasantry persisted in refusing to turn out.

We have seen the feeble and disorderly condition of the northern army at the time of Schuyler's arrival. His first object was to learn the state of Canada, and in Major John Brown he found a fearless, able, and trusty emissary. He next endeavored to introduce order into his command. On the twenty seventh of July the regiment of Green Mountain Boys elected its officers; the rash and boastful Ethan Allen was passed by, and instead of him Seth Warner, a man of equal courage and better judgment, was elected its lieutenant colonel.

Under the direction of Schuyler, boats were built at Ticonderoga as fast as possible; and his humanity brooked no delay in adopting measures for the relief of the sick; but as twelve hundred men formed the

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whole force that he could as yet lead beyond the border, he feared that the naval strength of the enemy might prevent his getting down the Sorel river; and on the sixth of August he wrote to congress, which had already adjourned, for information whether he was to proceed. The reference implied his own conviction, that his army was inadequate to the vast enterprise. Before the middle of the month, Brown returned from his perilous march of observation, and reported that now was the time to carry Canada; that the inhabitants were friends; that the number of regulars in Canada was only about seven hundred, of whom three hundred were at St. John's; that the militia openly refused to serve under the French officers lately appointed. At the same time a new arrival at Ticonderoga changed the spirit of the camp.

We have seen Richard Montgomery, who had served in the army from the age of fifteen, gain distinction in the Seven Years' war. Several years after his return to Ireland, he took the steps which he believed sufficient for his promotion to a majority; failing in his pursuit and thinking himself overreached, he sold his commission in disgust, and emigrated to New York. Here, in 1773, he renewed his former acquaintance with the family of Robert R. Livingston, and married his eldest daughter. Never intending to draw his sword again, studious in his habits, he wished for retirement; and his wife, whose affections he entirely possessed, willingly conformed to his tastes. At Rhinebeck a mill was built, a farm stocked, and the foundation of a new house laid, so that peaceful years seemed to await them. Montgomery was of a sanguine temperament, yet



the experience of life had tinged his spirit with melancholy, and he would often say: "My happiness is not lasting; but yet let us enjoy it as long as we may, and leave the rest to God." And they did enjoy life; blest with parents, brothers, sisters, and friends, their circle was always enlivened by intelligent conversation and the undisturbed flow of affection. The father of his wife used to say, that "if American liberty should not be maintained, he would carry his family to Switzerland, as the only free country in the world." War was the dream of her grandfather alone, the aged Robert Livingston, the stanchest and most sagacious patriot of them all. In 1773, in his eighty fourth year, he foretold the conflict with England, and when his son and grandchildren smiled at his credulity, "You, Robert," said he to his grandson, "will live to see this country independent." At the news of the retreat of the British from Concord, the octogenarian's eye kindled with the fire of youth, and he confidently announced American independence. Soon after the battle of Bunker Hill, he lay calmly on his deathbed, and his last words were: "What news from Boston?"

From such a family circle the county of Dutchess, in April, 1775, selected Montgomery as a delegate to the first provincial convention in New York, where he distinguished himself by unaffected modesty, promptness of decision, and soundness of judgment. On receiving his appointment as brigadier general he reluctantly bade adieu to his "quiet scheme of life;" "perhaps," he said, "for ever, but the will of an oppressed people, compelled to choose between liberty and slavery, must be obeyed."

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On the sixth of August, from Albany, he advised that Tryon, whose secret designs he had penetrated, should be conducted out of the way of mischief to Hartford. He reasoned justly on the expediency of taking possession of Canada, as the means of guarding against Indian hostilities, and displaying to the world the strength of the confederated colonies; it was enlarging the sphere of operations, but a failure would not impair the means of keeping the command of Lake Champlain. Summoned by Schuyler to Ticonderoga, he was attended as far as Saratoga by his wife, whose fears he soothed by cheerfulness and good humor, and his last words to her at parting were: "You will never have cause to blush for your Montgomery."

On the seventeenth of August his arrival at Ticonderoga was the signal for Schuyler to depart for Saratoga, promising to return on the twentieth. That day came, and other days followed, and still Schuyler remained away. On the twenty fifth, Montgomery wrote to him entreatingly to join the army with all expedition, as the way to give the men confidence in his spirit and activity. On the evening of the twenty sixth he received an express from Washington, who urged the acquisition of Canada and explained the plan for an auxiliary enterprise by way of the Kennebec. "I am sure," wrote the chief, "you will not let any difficulties, not insuperable, damp your ardor; perseverance and spirit have done wonders in all ages. You will therefore, by the return of this messenger, inform me of your ultimate resolution; not a moment's time is to be lost." In obedience to this letter, Schuyler

left the negotiation with Indians to the other commissioners at Albany, and set off for his army.

Montgomery, wherever he came, looked to see what could be done, and to devise the means of doing it; he had informed Schuyler that he should probably reach St. John's on the first day of September. Schuyler sent back no reply. "Moving without your orders," rejoined Montgomery, "I do not like; but the prevention of the enemy is of the utmost consequence; for if he gets his vessels into the lake, it is over with us for the present summer;" and he went forward with a thousand or twelve hundred men. Retarded by violent head winds and rain, it was the third of September when he arrived at Isle La Motte. On the fourth he was joined by Schuyler, and they proceeded to Isle aux Noix. The next day a declaration of friendship was dispersed amongst the inhabitants. On the sixth Schuyler, with forces not exceeding a thousand, embarked for St. John's. They landed without obstruction, a mile and a half from the fortress, towards which they marched in good order over marshy and wooded ground. In crossing a creek, the left of their advanced line was attacked by a party of Indians; but being promptly supported by Montgomery, it beat off the assailants, yet with a loss of nine subalterns and privates. Schuyler's health had declined as he approached the army. In the night, a person came to his tent with false information, which he laid before a council of war; their opinion being in accord with his own, he immediately ordered a retreat, and without carefully reconnoitring the fortress, he led back the troops unmolested to the Isle aux Noix. From that station

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he wrote to congress: "I have not enjoyed a moment's health since I left Fort George; and am now so low as not to be able to hold the pen. Should we not be able to do any thing decisively in Canada, I shall judge it best to move from this place, which is a very wet and unhealthy part of the country, unless I receive your orders to the contrary."

This letter was the occasion of "a large controversy" in congress; his proposal to abandon Isle aux Noix was severely disapproved; it was resolved to spare neither men nor money for his army, and if the Canadians would remain neuter, no doubt was entertained of the acquisition of Canada. He himself was encouraged to attend to his own health, and this advice implied a consent that the command of the invading forces should rest with Montgomery.

Meantime Schuyler, though confined to his bed, sent out on the tenth a party of five hundred; they returned on the eleventh, disgraced by "unbecoming behavior." Upon this Montgomery, having discerned in the men a rising spirit more consonant with his own, entreated permission to retrieve the late disasters; and Schuyler, who was put into a covered boat for Ticonderoga, turned his back on the scene with regret, but not with envy, and relinquished to the gallant Irishman the conduct, the danger, and the glory of the campaign.

The day after Schuyler left Isle aux Noix, Montgomery began the investment of St. John's. The Indians kept at peace, and the zealous efforts of the governor, the clergy, and the French nobility, had hardly added a hundred men to the garrison. Carleton thought himself abandoned by all the earth, and



wrote to the commander in chief at Boston: "I had hopes of holding out for this year, had the savages remained firm; but now we are on the eve of being overrun and subdued."

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On the morning after Montgomery's arrival near St. John's, he marched five hundred men to its north side. A party which sallied from the fort was beaten off, and the detachment was stationed at the junction of the roads to Chambly and Montreal. Additions to his force and supplies of food were continually arriving, through the indefatigable attention of Schuyler; and though the siege flagged for the want of powder, the investment was soon made so close that the retreat of the garrison was impossible.

The want of subordination delayed success. Ethan Allen had been sent to Chambly to raise a corps of Canadians. They gathered round him with spirit, and his officers advised him to lead them without delay to the army; but dazzled by vanity and rash ambition, he attempted to surprise Montreal. Dressed as was his custom when on a recruiting tour, in "a short fawn skin, double breasted jacket, a vest and breeches of woollen serge, and a red worsted cap," he passed over from Longueuil to Long Point, in the night preceding the twenty fifth of September, with about eighty Canadians and thirty Americans, though he had so few canoes, that but a third of his party could embark at once. On the next day he discovered that Brown, whom he had hoped to find with two hundred men on the south side of the town, had not crossed the river. Retreat from the island was impossible; about two hours after sunrise he was attacked by a motley party of regulars, English residents of Mon-

CHAP. treal, Canadians, and Indians, in all about five hun-  
 LII. dred men, and after a defence of an hour and three  
 1775. quarters, he, with thirty eight men, was obliged to  
 Sept. surrender; the rest fled to the woods. At the bar-  
 rack yard in Montreal, Prescott, a British brigadier,  
 asked the prisoner: "Are you that Allen who took  
 Ticonderoga?" "I am the very man," quoth Allen.  
 Then Prescott, in a great rage, called him a rebel and  
 other hard names, and raised his cane. At this Allen  
 shook his fist, telling him: "This is the beetle of mor-  
 tality for you, if you offer to strike." "You shall grace  
 a halter at Tyburn," cried Prescott, with an oath.

The wounded, seven in number, entered the hos-  
 pital; the rest were shackled together in pairs, and dis-  
 tributed among different transports in the river. But  
 Allen, as the chief offender, was chained with leg irons  
 weighing about thirty pounds; their heavy, substan-  
 tial bar was eight feet long; the shackles, which en-  
 compassed his ankles, were so very tight and close  
 that he could not lie down except on his back; and in  
 this plight, thrust into the lowest part of a vessel, the  
 captor of Ticonderoga was dragged to England, where  
 imprisonment in Pendennis Castle could not abate his  
 courage or his hope.

Oct. The issue of this rash adventure daunted the  
 Canadians for a moment, but difficulties only brought  
 out the resources of Montgomery. He was obliged  
 to act entirely from his own mind; for there was no  
 one about him competent to give advice. Of the  
 field officers, he esteemed Brown alone for his ability;  
 though Macpherson, his aide-de-camp, a very young  
 man, universally beloved, of good sense, and rare en-  
 dowments, gave promise of high capacity for war.

But his chief difficulties grew out of the badness of the troops. Schuyler also complained of the Connecticut soldiers, announcing even to congress: "If Job had been a general in my situation, his memory had not been so famous for patience." "The New Englanders," wrote Montgomery, "are the worst stuff imaginable for soldiers. They are homesick; their regiments are melted away, and yet not a man dead of any distemper. There is such an equality among them that the officers have no authority, and there are very few among them in whose spirit I have confidence; the privates are all generals, but not soldiers, and so jealous that it is impossible, though a man risk his person, to escape the imputation of treachery."

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Of the first regiment of Yorkers, he gave a far worse account; adding: "The master of Hindostan could not recompense me for this summer's work; I have envied every wounded man who has had so good an apology for retiring from a scene where no credit can be obtained. O fortunate husbandmen; would I were at my plough again!" Yet, amidst all his vexations, his reputation steadily rose throughout the country, and he won the affection of his army, so that every sick soldier, officer, or deserter, that passed home, agreed in praising him wherever they stopped.

The wearisomeness of delay, occasioned by the want of munitions of war, increased the anxiety of Montgomery. There was no hope of his reducing the garrison from their want of provisions. The ground on which he was encamped was very wet, the weather cold and rainy, so that the troops suffered exceedingly from sickness. Insubordination heightened his distress. Seeing that the battery was ill

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placed, he would have erected one at the distance of four hundred yards from the north side of the fort; but the judgment of the army was against him. "I did not consider," said he, "I was at the head of troops who carried the spirit of freedom into the field and think for themselves;" and saving appearances by consulting a council of war, he acquiesced in their reversing his opinion. In John Lamb, the captain of a New York company of artillery, he found "a restless genius, brave, active, and intelligent, but very turbulent and troublesome."

Anxious to relieve St. John's, Carleton, after the capture of Allen, succeeded in assembling about nine hundred Canadians at Montreal; but a want of mutual confidence, and the certainty that the inhabitants generally favored the Americans, dispirited them, and they disappeared by desertions, thirty or forty of a night, till he was left almost as forlorn as before. The Indians, too, he found of little service; "they were easily dejected, and chose to be of the strongest side, so that when they were most wanted they vanished." But history must preserve the fact that, though often urged to let them loose on the rebel provinces, in his detestation of cruelty he would not suffer a savage to pass the frontier.

In this state of mutual weakness, the inhabitants of the parishes of Chambly turned the scale. Ranging themselves under James Livingston of New York, then a resident in Canada, and assisted by Major Brown, with a small detachment from Montgomery, they sat down before the fort in Chambly, which, on the eighteenth of October, after a siege of a day and a half, was ingloriously surrendered by the Eng-



lish commandant. The colors of the seventh regiment, which were here taken, were transmitted as the first trophy to congress; the prisoners, one hundred and sixty eight in number, were marched to Connecticut; but the great gain to the Americans was seventeen cannon and six tons of powder.

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The siege of St. John's now proceeded with efficiency. The army of Montgomery yielded more readily to his guidance; Wooster of Connecticut had arrived, and set an example of cheerful obedience to his orders. At the northwest, a battery was constructed on an eminence within two hundred and fifty yards of the fort; and by the thirtieth it was in full action.

To raise the siege Carleton planned a junction with Maclean; but Montgomery sent Easton, Brown, and Livingston to watch Maclean, who was near the mouth of the Sorel, while Warner was stationed near Longueil. Having by desperate exertions got together about eight hundred Indians, Canadians, and regulars, Carleton, on the last day of October embarked them at Montreal, in thirty four boats, to cross the Saint Lawrence. But Warner, with three hundred Green Mountain Boys and men of the second New York regiment, watched their approach, and as they drew near the bank, poured on them so destructive a fire from the one four-pounder of the Americans, that they retired precipitately with loss and in disorder.

On the news of Carleton's defeat, Maclean, deserted by the Canadians, and losing all hope of support, retired to Quebec; while the besiegers pushed on their work with unceasing diligence, keeping up a well-directed fire by day and night. On the third of

Nov.

CHAP. November, after a siege of fifty days, the fort of St.  
LII. John's surrendered; and its garrison, consisting of five  
1775. hundred regulars, and one hundred Canadians, many  
Nov. of whom were of the French gentry, marched out  
with the honors of war.

Montgomery now hastened to Montreal as rapidly as the bad weather and worse roads would permit; and on the twelfth of November, unopposed, he took possession of the town. He came as the auxiliary of the Canadians, to give them the opportunity of establishing their freedom and reforming their laws; and he requested them to choose as soon as possible "faithful representatives to sit in the continental congress, and make a part of that union." He sought to impress them with the idea that the freedom of the thirteen colonies could never be securely enjoyed, so long as arbitrary government should remain established in Canada; that no reconciliation could take place till the liberties of all should be secured on the same basis. He did not think himself a great politician, but his plan had, as he believed, "the merit of being liberal, and of coming from an honest heart, void of any ambition but that of serving the public." He earnestly urged Schuyler to pass the winter at Montreal. In the midst of his unparalleled success, the hero longed to be below the Catskills, with his young wife, his pleasant farm occupations, and his books. "I am weary of power," said he to Schuyler; "I must go home this winter, if I walk by the side of the lake." "I have courted fortune," he wrote to his brother-in-law, "and found her kind. I have one more favor to solicit, and then I have done." Without Quebec, Canada remained unconquered; and honor

forbade him to turn back before attempting its capture. Men, money, and artillery were wanting; in the face of a Canadian winter, he nevertheless resolved to go down to Quebec, and pledged his word that on his part there should be no negligence of duty, no infirmity of purpose.

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## CHAPTER LIII.

### THE MARCH TO QUEBEC.

SEPTEMBER—NOVEMBER, 1775.

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THE detachment which Washington, as he thought-fully brooded over the future without hope of a speedy termination of the war, sent against Quebec, consisted of ten companies of New England infantry, one of riflemen from Virginia, and two from Pennsylvania, in all two battalions of about eleven hundred men. The command was given to Arnold, who, as a trader in years past, had visited Quebec, where he still had correspondents. In person he was short of stature and of a florid complexion; his broad, compact frame displayed a strong animal nature and power of endurance; he was complaisant and persuasive in his manners, daringly and desperately brave, avaricious and profuse, grasping but not sordid, sanguinely hopeful, of restless activity, "intelligent and enterprising."

The next in rank as lieutenant colonels were Roger Enos, who proved to be a craven, and the



brave Christopher Greene of Rhode Island. The majors were Return J. Meigs of Connecticut, and Timothy Bigelow, the early patriot of Worcester, Massachusetts. Morgan, with Humphreys and Heth, led the Virginia riflemen; Hendricks, a Pennsylvania company; Thayer commanded one from Rhode Island, and like Arnold, Meigs, Dearborn, Henry, Senter, Melvin, left a journal of the expedition. Aaron Burr, then but nineteen years old, and his friend Matthias Ogden, carrying muskets and knapsacks, joined as volunteers. Samuel Spring attended as chaplain.

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LIII.1775  
Sept.

The humane instructions given to Arnold enjoined respect for the rights of property and the freedom of opinion, and aimed at conciliating the affectionate cooperation of the Canadians. "If Lord Chatham's son," so wrote Washington, "should be in Canada, and in any way should fall into your power, you cannot pay too much honor to the son of so illustrious a character, and so true a friend to America." Chatham, on his part, from his fixed opinion of the war, withdrew his son from the service; and Carleton, anticipating that decision, had already sent him home as bearer of despatches.

To the Canadians, Washington's words were: "The cause of America and of liberty is the cause of every virtuous American citizen, whatever may be his religion or his descent. Come then, range yourselves under the standard of general liberty."

Boats and provisions having been collected, the detachment, on the evening of the thirteenth of September, marched to Medford. On the nineteenth they sailed from Newburyport, and on the morning of the twentieth were borne into the Kennebec.

CHAP. Passing above the bay where that river is met by the  
LIII. Androscoggin, they halted at Fort Western, which  
1775. consisted of two block houses, and one large house,  
Sept. enclosed with pickets, hard by the east bank of the  
river, on the site of Augusta. An exploring party of  
seven men went in advance to discover the shortest  
carrying place from the Kennebec to the Dead River,  
one of its branches, along a path which had already  
been marked, but which they made more distinct by  
blazing the trees and snagging the bushes. The de-  
tachment followed in four divisions, in as many  
successive days. Each division took provisions for  
forty five days. On the twenty fifth Morgan and  
the riflemen were sent first to clear the path; the  
following day Greene and Bigelow started with three  
companies of musketeers; Meigs with four companies  
was next in order; Enos with three companies closed  
the rear.

They ascended the river slowly to Fort Halifax,  
opposite Waterville; daily up to their waists in wa-  
ter, hauling their boats against a very rapid current.  
Oct. On the fourth of October they passed the vestiges  
of an Indian chapel, a fort, and the grave of the mis-  
sionary Rasles. After they took leave of settlements  
and houses at Norridgewock, their fatiguing and haz-  
ardous course lay up the swift Kennebec, and they  
conveyed arms and stores through the thick woods of  
a rough, uninhabited, and almost trackless wild; now  
rowing, now dragging their boats, now bearing them  
on their shoulders round rapids and cataracts, across  
morasses, over craggy highlands. On the tenth the  
party reached the dividing ridge between the Ken-

nebec and Dead River. Their road stretched through forests of pines, balsam fir, cedar, cypress, hemlock, and yellow birch, and over three ponds, that lay hid among the trees and were full of trout. After passing them, they had no choice but to bear their boats, baggage, stores, and ammunition across a swamp, which was overgrown with bushes and white moss, often sinking knee deep in the wet turf and bogs. From Dead River, Arnold on the thirteenth wrote to the commander of the northern army, announcing his plan of coöperation. Of his friends in Quebec he inquired what ships were there, what number of troops, and what was the disposition of the Canadians and merchants; and he forwarded his letter by an Indian.

CHAP.  
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1775  
Oct.

On the fifteenth the main body were on the banks of the Dead River; following its direction a distance of eighty three miles, encountering upon it seventeen falls, large enough to make portages necessary, and near its source a series of small ponds choked with fallen trees, in ten or twelve days more they arrived at the great carrying place to the Chaudière.

On the way they heard the disheartening news, that Enos, the second in command, had deserted the enterprise, leading back three companies to Cambridge. Yet the diminished party, enfeebled by sickness and desertion, with scanty food, and little ammunition, still persevered in their purpose to appear before a citadel, which was held to be the strongest in North America, and which the English officers in Canada would surely defend to the last.

The mountains had been clad in snow since Sep-

CHAP.  
LIII.1775.  
Oct.

tember; winter was howling around them, and their course was still to the north. On the night preceding the twenty eighth of October, some of the party encamped on the height of land that divides the waters of the Saint Lawrence and the Atlantic. As they advanced their sufferings increased. Some went barefoot for days together. Their clothes had become so torn, they were almost naked, and in their march were lacerated by thorns; at night they had no couch or covering but branches of evergreens. Often for successive days and nights they were exposed to cold, drenching storms, and had to cross streams that were swelling with the torrents of rain. Their provisions failed, so that they even eat the faithful dogs that followed them into the wilderness.

Many a man, vainly struggling to march on, sank down exhausted, stiffening with cold and death. Here and there a helpless invalid was left behind, with perhaps a soldier to hunt for a red squirrel, a jay, or a hawk, or various roots and plants for his food, and to watch his expiring breath. On Dead River, Macleland, the lieutenant of Hendrick's company, caught a cold, which inflamed his lungs; his friends tenderly carried him on a litter across the mountain, Hendrick himself in his turn putting his shoulder to the loved burden.

The men had hauled up their barges nearly all the way for one hundred and eighty miles, had carried them on their shoulders near forty miles, through hideous woods and mountains, often to their knees in mire, over swamps and bogs almost impenetrable, which they were obliged to cross three or four times to fetch their baggage; and yet starving, de-



serted, with an enemy's country and uncertainty ahead, officers and men, inspired with the love of liberty and their country, pushed on with invincible fortitude.

CHAP.  
LIII.  
1775.  
Oct.

The foaming Chaudière hurries swiftly down its rocky channel. Too eager to descend it quickly, the adventurers had three of their boats upset in the whirls of the stream; losing ammunition and precious stores, which they had brought along with so much toil.

The first day of November was bright and warm, like the weather of New England. "I passed a number of soldiers who had no provisions, and some that were sick, and had no power to help them," writes one of the party. At last, on the second of that month, French Canadians came up with two horses, driving before them five oxen; at which the party fired a salute for joy, and laughed with frantic delight. On the fourth, about an hour before noon, they descried a house at Sertigan, twenty five leagues from Quebec, near the fork of the Chaudière and the Du Loup. It was the first they had seen for thirty one days; and never could the view of rich cultivated fields or of flourishing cities awaken such ecstasy of gladness as this rude hovel on the edge of the wilderness. They did not forget their disabled fellow soldiers: McLellan was brought down to the comfortable shelter, though he breathed his farewell to the world the day after his arrival.

Nov.

The party followed the winding of the river to the parish of St. Mary, straggling through a flat and rich country, which had for its ornament many low, bright, whitewashed houses, the comfortable abodes of

CHAP. a cheerful, courteous, and hospitable people. Here  
LIII. and there along the road chapels met their eyes, and  
1775. images of the Virgin Mary and rude imitations of the  
Nov. Saviour's sorrows.

For seven weeks Cramahé, the lieutenant governor, had been repairing the breaches in the walls of Quebec, which were now put into a good posture for defence. The repeated communications, intrusted by Arnold to friendly Indians, had been, in part at least, intercepted. On the eighth of November his approach was known at Quebec, but not the amount of his force; and the British officers, in this state of uncertainty, were not without apprehensions that the affair would soon be over.

On the tenth Arnold arrived at Point Levi, but all boats had been carefully removed from that side of the Saint Lawrence. He waited until the thirteenth for the rear to come up, and employed the time in making ladders and collecting canoes, while Quebec was rapidly gaining strength for resistance. On the fifth of November a vessel from Newfoundland had brought a hundred carpenters. Colonel Allan Maclean arrived on the twelfth with a hundred and seventy men, levied chiefly among disbanded Highlanders who had settled in Canada. The *Lizard* and the *Hunter*, ships of war, were in the harbor; and the masters of merchant ships with their men were detained for the defence of the town. At nine in the evening of the thirteenth, Arnold began his embarkation in canoes, which were but thirty in number, and carried less than two hundred at a time; yet by crossing the river three several times, before day-break on the morning of the fourteenth, all of his

party, except about one hundred and fifty left at Point Levi, were landed undiscovered, yet without their ladders, at Wolfe's cove. The feeble band met no resistance as they climbed the oblique path to the Plains of Abraham. Wolfe had come, commanding the river with a fleet, they, in frail bark canoes, hardly capable of holding a fourth of their number at a time; Wolfe, with a well appointed army of thousands, they with less than six hundred effective men or a total of about seven hundred, and those in rags, barefooted, and worn down with fatigue; Wolfe with artillery, they with muskets only, and those muskets so damaged that one hundred were unfit for service; Wolfe with unlimited stores of ammunition, they with spoiled cartridges and a very little damaged powder.

If it had required weeks for Montgomery with an army of two thousand men to reduce St. John's, how could Quebec, a large and opulent town of five thousand inhabitants, strongly fortified and carefully guarded, be taken in a moment by five hundred half armed musketeers? "The enemy being apprised of our coming," says Arnold, "we found it impracticable to attack them without too great risk." In the course of the day he led two or three hundred men within sight of the walls, where they gave three huzzas of defiance; and in the evening he sent a flag to demand the surrender of the place. The flag was not received, and the British would not come out. For two or three days Arnold encamped about a mile and a half from town, posting on all its avenues small guards, which actually prevented fuel or refreshments of any kind being brought in. Yet the invaders

CHAP  
LIII.  
1775  
Nov.

CHAP. were not to be dreaded, except for their friends within  
LIII. the walls, whose rising would have offered the only  
1775. chance of success; but of this there were no signs.  
Nov. Arnold then ordered a strict examination to be made  
into the state of his ammunition, and as the result  
showed no more than five rounds to each man, it was  
judged imprudent to run the risk of a battle; and on  
the nineteenth his party retired to Point aux Trem-  
bles, eight leagues above Quebec, where they awaited  
the orders of Montgomery.



## CHAPTER LIV.

### THE SIEGE OF QUEBEC.

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 1775.

THE day before Montgomery entered Montreal, Carleton, with more than a hundred regulars and Canadians, embarked on board some small vessels in the port to descend to Quebec. He was detained in the river for several days by contrary winds, and moreover he found the St. Lawrence, near the mouth of the Sorel, guarded by continental troops under Easton. On the seventeenth of November, Prescott, the brigadier who had so lately treated Allen with insolent cruelty, surrendered the flotilla of eleven sail with all the soldiers, sailors, and stores on board; but in the darkest hour of the previous night, Carleton, entering a small boat in the disguise of a peasant, had been safely paddled through the islands that lie opposite the Sorel. Touching as a fugitive at Trois Rivières, he arrived on the nineteenth at Quebec, where his presence diffused joy and confidence among the loyal. Thus far he had shown

CHAP.  
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Nov.

CHAP. great poverty of resources as a military chief; but his  
LIV. humane disposition, his caution, his pride, and his  
1775. firmness were guarantees that Quebec would be per-  
Nov. tinaciously defended. Besides, he had been Wolfe's  
quartermaster general, and had himself witnessed how  
much of the success of his chief had been due to the  
rashness of Montcalm in risking a battle outside of  
the walls.

The rapid success of Montgomery had emboldened a party in Quebec to confess a willingness to receive him on terms of capitulation. But on the twenty second, Carleton ordered all persons who would not join in the defence of the town, to leave it within four days; and after their departure he found himself supported by more than three hundred regulars, three hundred and thirty Anglo-Canadian militia, five hundred and forty three French Canadians, four hundred and eighty five seamen and marines, beside a hundred and twenty artificers capable of bearing arms.

Montgomery had conquered rather as the leader of a disorderly band of turbulent freemen, than as the commander of a disciplined army. Not only had the troops from the different colonies had their separate regulations and terms of enlistment, but the privates retained the inquisitiveness and self-direction of civil life, so that his authority depended chiefly on his personal influence and his powers of persuasion. Now that Montreal was taken and winter was come, homesickness so prevailed among them that he was left with no more than eight hundred men to garrison his conquests, and to go down against Quebec. He was deserted even by most of the Green Mountain Boys, who at first were disposed to share his winter

campaign. The continental congress, which was eager for the occupation of Canada, took no seasonable care to supply the places of his men as their time of enlistment expired.

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1775.  
Nov.

On the twenty sixth, leaving St. John's under the command of Marinus Willett of New York, and intrusting the government of Montreal to Wooster of Connecticut, and in the spirit of a lawgiver who was to regenerate the province making a declaration that on his return he would call a convention of the Canadian people, Montgomery embarked in a fleet of three armed schooners, with artillery and provisions and three hundred troops; and on the third day of December, at Point aux Trembles, made a junction with Arnold. "The famine-proof veterans," now but six hundred and seventy five in number, were paraded in front of the Catholic chapel, to hear their praises from the lips of the modest hero, who, in animating words, did justice to the courage with which they had braved the wilderness, and to their superior style of discipline. From the public stores which he had taken, they received clothing suited to the terrible climate; and about noon on the fifth, the little army, composed of less than a thousand American troops and a volunteer regiment of about two hundred Canadians, appeared before Quebec, in midwinter, to take the strongest fortified city in America, defended by more than two hundred cannon of heavy metal, and a garrison of twice the number of the besiegers.

Dec

Quick of perception, of a hopeful temperament, and impatient of delay, Montgomery saw at a glance his difficulties, and yet "thought there was a fair prospect of success." He could not expect it from a

CHAP. siege, for he had no battering train ; nor by investing  
LIV. the place, which had provisions for eight months ;  
1775. there could therefore be no hope of its capture but  
Dec. by storm, and as the engagements of the New Eng-  
land men ended with the thirty first of December,  
the assault must be made within twenty six days.  
He grieved for the loss of life that might ensue, but  
his decision was prompt and unchanging. The works  
of the lower town were the weakest ; these he  
thought it possible to carry, and then the favor of  
the inhabitants in the upper town, their concern for  
their property, the unwarlike character of the gar-  
rison, the small military ability of Carleton, offered  
chances of victory.

The first act of Montgomery was a demand for  
the surrender of the city ; but his flag of truce was  
not admitted. On the sixth he addressed an extrava-  
gant and menacing letter to Carleton, which was sent  
by a woman of the country, and of which a copy was  
afterwards shot into the town upon an arrow ; but  
Carleton would hold no communication with him,  
and every effort at correspondence with the citizens  
failed.

Four or five mortars were placed in St. Roc's, but  
the small shells which they threw did no essential in-  
jury to the garrison. Meantime a battery was begun  
on the heights of Abraham, about seven hundred yards  
southwest of St. John's gate. The ground was frozen  
and covered with deep snow, so that earth was not to  
be had ; the gabions and the interstices of the fas-  
cines were therefore filled with snow ; and on this  
water was poured in large quantities, which froze in-  
stantly in the intense cold. On the fifteenth, the



day after the work was finished, a flag of truce was again sent towards the wall with letters for the governor; but he refused to receive them or "hold any kind of parley with rebels." Montgomery knew that Carleton was sincere, and if necessary would sooner be buried under heaps of ruins than come to terms. The battery, consisting of but six twelve-pounders and two howitzers, had been thrown up only to lull the enemy into security at other points; it was too light to make any impression on the walls, while its embankment was pierced through and through, and its guns destroyed, by the heavy artillery of the fortress. Some lives were lost, but the invaders suffered more from pleurisy and other diseases of the lungs; and the smallpox began its ravages.

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Dec.

A faint glimmer of hope still lingered, that the repeated defiance would induce Carleton to come out; but he could not be provoked into making an attempt to drive off the besiegers. "To the storming we must come at last," said Montgomery. On the evening of the sixteenth, a council was held by all the commissioned officers of Arnold's detachment, and a large majority voted for making an assault as soon as the men could be provided with bayonets, hatchets, and hand grenades. "In case of success," said Montgomery, "the effects of those who have been most active against the united colonies must fall to the soldiery." Days of preparation ensued, during which he revolved his desperate situation. His rapid conquests had filled the voice of the world with his praise; the colonies held nothing impossible to his good conduct and fortune; he had received the order of congress to hold Quebec, if it should come into his

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Dec.

hands; should that fortress be taken the Canadians would enter heartily into the Union and send their deputies to congress. "Fortune," said he, "favors the brave; and no fatal consequences are likely to attend a failure."

One day the general, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Macpherson, the pure-minded, youthful enthusiast for liberty, went out to meditate on "the spot where Wolfe had fallen, fighting for England in friendship with America." He ran a parallel in his mind between the career of Wolfe and his own; he had lost the ambition which once sweetened a military life, and a sense of duty was now his only spring of action; if the Americans should continue to prosper, he wished to return to the retired life in which he alone found delight; but said he, "should the scene change, I shall be always ready to contribute to the public safety." And his last message to his brother-in-law was: "Adieu, my dear Robert; may your happy talents ever be directed to the good of mankind."

As the time for the assault drew near, three captains in Arnold's battalion, whose term of service was soon to expire, created dissension, and showed a mutinous disaffection to the service. In the evening of the twenty third, Montgomery repaired to their quarters, and in few words gave them leave to stand aside; "he would compel none; he wanted with him no persons who went with reluctance." His words recalled the officers to their duty, but the incident hurried him into a resolution to attempt gaining Quebec before the first of January, when his legal authority to restrain the waywardness of the discontented would cease. At sundown of Christmas he reviewed

Arnold's battalion at Morgan's quarters, and addressed them with spirit; after which a council of war agreed on a night attack on the lower town. For the following days the troops kept themselves in readiness at a moment's warning. In the interval the intention was revealed by a deserter to the garrison, so that every preparation was made against a surprise; two thirds of the men lay on their arms; in the upper town, Carleton and others not on duty slept in their clothes; in the lower, volunteer pickets kept watch; and they all wished ardently that the adventurous attempt might not be delayed.

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Dec.

The night of the twenty sixth was clear, and so cold that no man could handle his arms or scale a wall. The evening of the twenty seventh was hazy, and the troops were put in motion; but as the sky soon cleared up, the general, who was tender of their lives, called them back, choosing to wait for the shelter of a favorable night, that is, for a night of clouds and darkness with a storm of wind and snow.

For the next days the air was serene, and a mild westerly wind brightened the sky. On the thirtieth a snow storm from the northeast set in. But a few hours more of the old year remained, and with it the engagement of many of his troops would expire; Montgomery must act now, or resign the hope of crowning his career by the capture of Quebec. Orders were therefore given for the troops to be ready at two o'clock of the following morning; and that they might recognise one another, each soldier wore in his cap a piece of white paper, on which some of them wrote: "LIBERTY OR DEATH."

It was Montgomery's plan to alarm the garrison

CHAP. at once, along the whole line of their defences.  
LIV. Colonel James Livingston, with less than two hun-  
— dred Canadians, was to attract attention by appear-  
1775. ing before St. John's gate, on the southwest; while a  
Dec. company of Americans under Brown were to feign a  
movement on Cape Diamond, where the wall faces  
south by west, and from that high ground, at the  
proper time, were to fire rockets, as the signal for  
beginning the real attacks on the lower town, under  
Arnold from the west and north, under Montgomery  
from the south and east.

The general, who reserved for his own party less than three hundred Yorkers, led them in Indian file from head quarters at Holland House to Wolfe's Cove, and then about two miles further along the shore. The path was so rough that in several places they were obliged to scramble up slant rocks covered with two feet of snow, and then, with a precipice on their right, to descend by sliding down fifteen or twenty feet. The wind, which was at east by north, blew furiously in their faces, with cutting hail, which the eye could not endure; their constant step wore the frozen snow into little lumps of ice, so that the men were fatigued by their struggles not to fall, and they could not keep their arms dry.

The signal from Cape Diamond being given more than half an hour too soon, the general with his aide-de-camps, Macpherson and Burr, pushed on with the front, composed of Cheesman's company and Mott's; and more than half an hour before day they arrived at the first barrier, with the guides and carpenters. The rest of the party lagged behind; and the ladders were not within half a mile. Montgomery and Chees-



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Dec.

man were the first that entered the undefended barrier, passing on between the rock and the pickets which the carpenters began to saw and wrench away. While a message was sent back to hurry up the troops, Montgomery went forward to observe the path before him. It was a very narrow defile, falling away to the river precipitously on the one side, and shut in by the scarped rock and overhanging cliff on the other, so that not more than five or six persons could walk abreast; a house built of logs and extending on the south nearly to the river, with loopholes for musketry and a battery of two three-pounders, intercepted the passage. It was held by a party consisting of thirty Canadian and eight British militiamen under John Coffin, with nine seamen under Barns-fare, the master of a transport, as cannoniers. The general listened, and heard no sound; and it was afterwards thought that the guard was not on the alert; but lights from lanterns on the plains of Abraham, as well as the signal rockets, had given the alarm; and at daybreak, through the storm, the body of troops was seen in full march from Wolfe's Cove. At their approach to the barrier, "a part of the guard was scared with a panic;" but Coffin, who during the siege "had never missed an hour's duty," restored order, and the sailors stood at their guns with lighted linstocks.

Montgomery waited till about sixty men had joined him inside of the row of pickets; then exclaiming, "Men of New York, you will not fear to follow where your general leads; push on, brave boys; Quebec is ours!" he pressed forward at double quick time to carry the battery. As he appeared on a little rising in the ground, at a distance of fifty yards or less from the mouths of the cannon, which were loaded

CHAP. with grapeshot, Barnsfare discharged them with dead-  
LIV. ly aim. Montgomery, his aid Macpherson, the young  
— and gallant Cheesman, and ten others, instantly fell  
1775. dead; Montgomery from three wounds. With him  
Dec. the soul of the expedition fled. Mott was eager  
to go forward; but some of the men complained that  
their arms were wet; one or more of the officers  
thought nothing further could be attempted with  
wearied troops and no arm but the bayonet; fireballs  
were thrown by the enemy to light up the scene; their  
musketeers began to fire from the loopholes of the  
blockhouse; and Donald Campbell, who assumed the  
command of the Yorkers, encountered the reproach  
of ordering an immediate retreat, which was effected  
without further loss.

On the northwestern side of the lower town, Arnold led the forlorn hope, which consisted of more than twice as many troops as followed Montgomery. The path along the St. Charles had been narrowed by masses of ice thrown up from the river; and the battery by which it was commanded might have raked every inch of it with grape shot, while their flank was exposed to musketry from the walls. As they reached Palace Gate, the bells of the city were rung, the drums beat a general alarm, and the cannon began to play. The Americans ran along in single file, holding down their heads on account of the storm, and covering their guns with their coats. Lamb and his company of artillery followed with a fieldpiece on a sled; the fieldpiece was soon abandoned, but he and his men took part in the assault.

The first barricade was at the Sault au Matelot, a jutting rock which left little space between the river

beach and the precipice. Near this spot Arnold was severely wounded in the leg by a musket ball, and carried off disabled; but Morgan's men, who formed the van, rushed forward to the portholes and fired into them, while others, Charles Porterfield the second, Morgan himself the first, mounted by ladders, carried the battery, and took its captain and guard prisoners. But Morgan was at first followed only by his own company and a few Pennsylvanians. It was still very dark; he had no guide; and he knew nothing of the defences of the town. The cold was extreme; the faces of the men were hoar with icicles. Their muskets were made useless by the storm. The glow of attack began to subside, and the danger of their position to appear. They were soon joined by Greene, Bigelow, and Meigs, so that there were at least two hundred Americans in the town; and they all fearlessly pressed on in the narrow way to the second barricade, at the eastern extremity of Sault au Matelot street, where the defences extended from the rock to the river. Under the direction of Greene, heroic efforts were made to carry them. With a voice louder than the northeast gale, Morgan cheered on his riflemen; but though Heth and Porterfield and a few others in the front files ascended the scaling ladders, it was only to see on the other side rows of troops prepared to receive them on hedges of bayonets if they had leaped down. Here was the greatest loss of life; some of the American officers fell; others received several balls in their clothes; and the assailants, of whose arms nine out of ten had been rendered useless by the storm, were exposed in the narrow street to a heavy fire from houses on both sides. A retreat was

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CHAP. thought of; but the moment for it soon went by;  
LIV. though some few escaped, passing over the shoal ice  
1775. on the St. Charles. Near daylight, about two hun-  
Dec. dred of the Americans withdrew from the streets,  
and found shelter in houses of stone, from which they  
could fire with better effect. It was then that Hendricks, while aiming his rifle, was shot through the heart. But the retreat of Campbell, and the certainty that the other attacks were only feints, left Carleton free to concentrate all his force against the party of Arnold. By his orders a sally was now made from Palace Gate, in the rear of the Americans, by Captain Laws, with two hundred men; they found Dearborn's company divided into two parties, each of which successively surrendered; and then the remnant of the assailants, "the flower of the rebel army," "was cooped up" within the town. Morgan proposed that they should cut their way through their enemies; but retreat had become impracticable; and after maintaining the struggle till the last hope was gone, at ten o'clock they surrendered. Thus Greene, Meigs, Morgan, Hendricks, the hardy men who had passed the wilderness with purposes of conquest, made for themselves a heroic name, but found their way only to death or a prison. To the captives Carleton proved a humane and generous enemy. The loss of the British was inconsiderable; that of the Americans, in killed or wounded, was about sixty; in prisoners, between three and four hundred.

When the battle was over, thirteen bodies were found at the place now known as Pres-de-Ville. The body of Cheesman, whose career had been a brief but gallant one, had fallen over the rocks. In the path-



way lay Macpherson, a youth, as spotless as the new-fallen snow which was his winding sheet; full of genius for war, lovely in temper, honored by the affection and confidence of his chief, dear to the army, leaving not his like behind him. There, too, by his side, lay Richard Montgomery, on the spot where he fell. At his death he was in the first month of his fortieth year. He was tall and slender, well limbed, of a graceful address, and a strong and active frame. He could endure fatigue, and all changes and severities of climate. His judgment was cool, though he kindled in action, imparting confidence and sympathetic courage. Never himself negligent of duty, never avoiding danger, discriminating and energetic, he had the power of conducting freemen by their voluntary love and esteem. An experienced soldier, he was also well versed in letters, particularly in natural science. In private life he was a good husband, brother, and son, an amiable and faithful friend. The rectitude of his heart shone forth in his actions, which were habitually and unaffectedly directed by a nice moral sense. He overcame difficulties which others shunned to encounter. Foes and friends paid tribute to his worth. The governor, lieutenant governor, and council of Quebec, and all the principal officers of the garrison, buried him and his aide-de-camp, Macpherson, with the honors of war.

At the news of his death "the whole city of Philadelphia was in tears; every person seemed to have lost his nearest relative or heart friend." Congress proclaimed for him "their grateful remembrance, profound respect, and high veneration; and desiring

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to transmit to future ages a truly worthy example of patriotism, conduct, boldness of enterprise, insuperable perseverance, and contempt of danger and death," they reared a marble monument "to the glory of Richard Montgomery."

In the British parliament, the great defenders of liberty vied with each other in his praise. Barré, his veteran fellow-soldier in the late war, wept profusely as he expatiated on their fast friendship and participation of service in that season of enterprise and glory, and holding up the British commanders in review, pronounced a glowing tribute to his superior merits. Edmund Burke contrasted the condition of the eight thousand men, starved, disgraced, and shut up within the single town of Boston, with the movements of the hero who in one campaign had conquered two thirds of Canada. "I," replied North, "cannot join in lamenting the death of Montgomery as a public loss. He was brave, he was able, he was humane, he was generous; but still he was only a brave, able, humane, and generous rebel. Curse on his virtues, they've undone his country." "The term of rebel," retorted Fox, "is no certain mark of disgrace. All the great assertors of liberty, the saviours of their country, the benefactors of mankind in all ages, have been called rebels. We owe the constitution which enables us to sit in this house to a rebellion."

So passed away the spirit of Montgomery, with the love of all that knew him, the grief of the nascent republic, and the eulogies of the world.

## CHAPTER LV.

THE ROYAL GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA INVITES THE SERV-  
ANTS AND SLAVES TO RISE AGAINST THEIR MASTERS.

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 1775.

THE central colonies still sighed for reconciliation; the tories and the timid were waiting for commissioners; the credit of the continental paper money languished and declined; the general congress in December, while they answered the royal proclamation of August by threats of retaliation, and a scornful rejection of allegiance to parliament, professed allegiance to the king, and distinguished between their "resistance to tyranny" and "rebellion;" but all the while a steady current drifted the country towards independence. In New Jersey, the regular colonial assembly, which was still kept in existence, granted the usual annual support of the royal government. On the fifth of December they resolved themselves into a committee of the whole, to consider the draft of a separate address to the king; but as that mode of action tended to divide and insulate the

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provinces, Dickinson, Jay, and Wythe were sent by the general congress to Burlington, to dissuade from the measure. Admitted to the assembly, Dickinson, who still refused to believe that no heed would be taken of the petition delivered by Richard Penn, excused the silence of the king, and bade them wait to find an answer in the conduct of parliament and the administration. "After Americans were put to death without cause at Lexington," said he, "had the new continental congress drawn the sword and thrown away the scabbard, all lovers of liberty would have applauded. To convince Britain that we will fight, an army has been formed, and Canada invaded. Success attends us everywhere; the savages who were to have been let loose to murder our wives and children are our friends; the Canadians fight in our cause; and Canada, from whence armies were to overrun us, is conquered in as few months as it took Britain years; so that we have nothing to fear but from Europe, which is three thousand miles distant. Until this controversy, the strength and importance of our country was not known; united it cannot be conquered. The nations of Europe look with jealous eyes on the struggle; should Britain be unsuccessful in the next campaign, France will not sit still. Nothing but unity and bravery will bring Britain to terms; she wants to procure separate petitions, which we should avoid, for they would break our union, and we should become a rope of sand; rest, then, on your former noble petition, and on that of United America." "We have nothing to expect from the mercy or justice of Britain," argued Jay; "vigor and unanimity, not petitions, are our only means of safety."



Wythe of Virginia spoke for a few minutes to the same purpose, and the well-disposed assembly of New Jersey conformed to their joint advice.

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Simultaneously with the intrigues to allure New Jersey into a separate system, Tryon, who since the thirtieth of October had had his quarters on board the armed ship *Duchess of Gordon*, in New York harbor, recommended a similar policy to the inhabitants of New York; but William Smith, the historian, who busied himself with opening the plan privately to members of the provincial congress, met with the most signal rebuke. Roused by the insidious proposal, the New York convention, while it disclaimed the desire to become independent, attributed the existing discontent to the hostile attempts of the ministry to execute oppressive acts of the British parliament, designed for enslaving the American colonies; on the motion of John Morin Scott, they rejected the thought of "a separate declaration, as inconsistent with the glorious plan of American union;" on motion of Macdougall, they confirmed the deliberative powers of the continental congress; and they perfected their organization by establishing a committee of safety with full executive powers within the colony. The king would receive no communications from the general congress, and all separate overtures were at an end.

Meantime France and the thirteen colonies were mutually attracted towards each other; and it is not easy to decide which of them made the first movement towards an intercourse. The continental congress in December voted to build thirteen ships of war, thus founding a navy, which was to be governed by a ma-

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rine committee, consisting of one member from each colony; yet as they still would not open their ports, they were in no condition to solicit an alliance. But Dumas, a Swiss by birth, a resident inhabitant of Holland, the liberal editor of Vattel's work on international law, had written to Franklin, his personal friend, that "all Europe wished the Americans the best success in the maintenance of their liberty:" on the twelfth of December the congressional committee of secret correspondence authorized Arthur Lee, who was then in London, to ascertain the disposition of foreign powers; and Dumas, at the Hague, was charged with a similar commission.

Just then, De Bonvouloir, the discreet emissary of Vergennes, arrived in Philadelphia, and through Francis Daymon, a Frenchman, the trusty librarian of the Library Company in that city, was introduced to Franklin and the other members of the secret committee, with whom he held several conferences by night. "Will France aid us? and at what price?" were the questions put to him. "France," answered he, "is well disposed to you; if she should give you aid, as she may, it will be on just and equitable conditions. Make your proposals, and I will present them." "Will it be prudent for us to send over a plenipotentiary?" asked the committee. "That," replied he, "would be precipitate and even hazardous, for what passes in France is known in London; but if you will give me any thing in charge, I may receive answers well suited to guide your conduct; although I can guarantee nothing except that your confidence will not be betrayed." From repeated interviews De Bonvouloir obtained

such just views, that his report to the French minister, though confusedly written, is in substance exact. He explained that "the Americans hesitated about a declaration of independence, and an appeal to France; that the British king had not as yet done them evil enough; that they still waited to have more of their towns destroyed and more of their houses burned, before they would completely abhor the emblems of British power; that a brig was despatched to Nantes for munitions of war, and an arrangement made for purchasing the same articles of France by way of St. Domingo; that skilful engineers were much wanted; that everybody in the colonies appeared to have turned soldier; that they had given up the English flag, and had taken for their devices, a rattlesnake with thirteen rattles, and a mailed arm holding thirteen arrows."

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The communications of the French agent to the secret committee were not without influence on the proceedings of congress; in France his letters were to form the subject of the most momentous deliberation which had engaged the attention of a French king for two centuries.

Some foreign commerce was required for the continuance of the war: the Americans had no magazine to replenish their little store of powder, no arsenal to furnish arms; their best dependence was on prizes, made under the pine-tree flag by the brave Manly and others, who cruised in armed ships with commissions from Washington; even flints were obtained only from captured storeships, and it was necessary to fetch cannon from Ticonderoga. The men who enlisted for the coming year, were desired to bring

CHAP. LV. } their own arms; those whose time expired, were com-  
1775. } pelled to part with theirs at a valuation; for blankets  
Dec. } the general appealed to the families of New England,  
asking one or more of every household; the villages,  
in their town meetings, encouraged the supply of  
wood to the camp by voting a bounty from the town  
treasuries.

The enlistments for the new army went on slowly, for the New England men, willing to drive the enemy from Boston, were disinclined to engagements which would take them far from home, on wages to be paid in a constantly depreciating currency; besides, the continental bills were remitted so tardily and in such inadequate amounts, that even those wages were not paid with regularity; and the negligence threatened "the destruction of the army." For want of funds to answer the accounts of the commissary and quartermaster, the troops were forced to submit to a reduced allowance. Washington himself felt keenly the habitual inattention of congress and its agents; and the sense of suffering wrongfully and needlessly, engendered discontent in his camp. He would have had the whole army like himself rise superior to every hardship; and when there were complaints of unfulfilled engagements, angry bickerings about unadjusted dues, or demands for the computation of pay by lunar months, he grieved that the New England men should mar the beauty of their self-sacrificing patriotism by persistent eagerness for petty gains.

The Connecticut soldiers, whose enlistment expired early in December, were determined to leave the service. They were entreated to remain till the end of the year, and were ordered to remain at least



for ten days, when they should be relieved; Leonard, one of their chaplains, preached to them on the duty of courage and subordination; nevertheless many of "the Connecticut gentry" made the best of their way to their own firesides, some with their arms and ammunition. Washington would have had Trumbull make an example of the deserters. Trumbull answered: "The pulse of a New England man beats high for liberty; his engagement in the service he thinks purely voluntary; when the time of enlistment is out, he thinks himself not further holden this is the genius and spirit of our people." But the inhabitants along their homeward road expressed abhorrence at their quitting the army, and would scarcely furnish them with provisions; and the rebuke they met with in their towns, drove many of them back to the camp. Others in Connecticut volunteered to take the places of those who withdrew; but Washington had, through the colonial governments, already called out three thousand men from the militia of Massachusetts, and two thousand from New Hampshire, who repaired to the camp with celerity, and cheerfully braved "the want of wood, barracks, and blankets." In this manner, with little aid from the general congress, Washington continued the siege of Boston, and enlisted a new army for the following year, as well as could be done without money in the treasury, or powder or arms in store. His ceaseless vigilance guarded against every danger; the fortifications were extended to Lechmere's Point, and every possible landing place for a sallying party from Boston was secured by intrenchments.

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The press of New England avowed more and

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more distinctly the general expectation that America would soon form itself into a republic of united colonies. Such was become the prevailing desire of the army, although Lee still hoped to act a part in bringing about a reconciliation through a change of the British ministry. This is the real purport of an elaborate letter addressed by him to Burgoyne, who was about to sail for England; for which he excused himself to an American friend by saying: "I am convinced that you have not virtue enough for independence, nor do I think it calculated for your happiness; besides, I have some remaining prejudices as an Englishman."

In December, Lee left the camp for ten days, to inspect the harbor of Newport, and plan works for its defence. His visit, which had no permanent effect, was chiefly remarkable for his arbitrary conduct in "administering a very strong oath to some of the leading tories." After his departure the British vessels of war plundered the islands in Narragansett bay as before.

Meantime Dunmore, driven from the land of Virginia, maintained the command of the water by means of a flotilla, composed of the *Mercury* of twenty four guns, the *Kingfisher* of sixteen, the *Otter* of fourteen, with other ships, and light vessels, and tenders, which he had engaged in the king's service. At Norfolk, a town of about six thousand inhabitants, a newspaper was published by John Holt. About noon on the last day of September, Dunmore, finding fault with its favoring "sedition and rebellion," sent on shore a small party, who, meeting no resistance, seized and brought off two printers and all the

materials of a printing office, so that he could publish from his ship a gazette on the side of the king. The outrage, as we shall see, produced retaliation.

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In October, Dunmore repeatedly landed detachments to seize arms wherever he could find them. Thus far Virginia had not resisted the British by force; the war began in that colony with the defence of Hampton, a small village at the end of the isthmus between York and James rivers. An armed sloop had been driven on its shore in a very violent gale; its people took out of her six swivels and other stores, made some of her men prisoners, and then set her on fire. Dunmore blockaded the port; they called to their assistance a company of "shirt men," as the British called the Virginia regulars from the hunting shirt which was their uniform, and another company of minute men, besides a body of militia.

On the twenty sixth Dunmore sent some of the tenders close into Hampton Roads to destroy the town. The guard marched out to repel them, and the moment they came within gunshot, George Nicholas, who commanded the Virginians, fired his musket at one of the tenders. It was the first gun fired in Virginia against the British: his example was followed by his party. Retarded by boats which had been sunk across the channel, the British on that day vainly attempted to land. In the following night the Culpepper riflemen were despatched to the aid of Hampton, and William Woodford, colonel of the second regiment of Virginia, second in rank to Patrick Henry, was sent by the committee of safety from Williamsburg to take the direction. The next day

CHAP. the British, having cut their way through the sunken  
LV. boats, renewed the attack; but the riflemen poured  
1775. upon them a heavy fire, killing a few and wound-  
Oct. ing more. One of the tenders was taken with its ar-  
mament and seven seamen; the rest were with dif-  
ficulty towed out of the creek. The Virginians lost  
not a man. This is the first battle of the revolution  
in the Ancient Dominion; and its honors belonged to  
the Virginians.

Nov. While yet a prey to passion after this repulse,  
Dunmore was informed that a hundred and twenty or  
thirty North Carolina rebels were marching into the  
colony, to occupy the Great Bridge, which, at a dis-  
tance of nine or ten miles from Norfolk, crossed the  
Elizabeth river. It rested on each side upon firm  
dry ground, which rose like islands above the wide  
spreading morasses, and could be approached only  
by causeways; so that it formed a very strong pass,  
protecting the approach to Norfolk by land from  
the county of Princess Anne and from a part of the  
county of Norfolk. He had twice received detach-  
ments from the fourteenth regiment, which had been  
stationed at St. Augustine: collecting all of them who  
were able to do duty, and attended by volunteers  
from Norfolk, Dunmore on the fourteenth of Novem-  
ber hastened to the Great Bridge. Finding no Caro-  
linians, he marched rapidly to disperse a body of mi-  
litia who were assembled at Kemp's Landing, in Prin-  
cess Anne. They lay in an ambuscade to receive him,  
and fired upon his party from a thicket; but being in-  
ferior in numbers, in discipline, and in arms, they soon  
fled, panic struck and in confusion, leaving their com-  
mander and six others as prisoners. On his return, he



ordered a fort to be built at the Great Bridge, on the side nearest Norfolk.

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Encouraged by "this most trifling success," Dunmore raised the king's flag, and publishing a proclamation which he had signed on the seventh, he established martial law, required every person capable of bearing arms to resort to his standard, under penalty of forfeiture of life and property, and declared freedom to "all indented servants, negroes, or others, appertaining to rebels," if they would "join for the reducing the colony to a proper sense of its duty." The effect of this invitation to convicts and slaves to rise against their masters was not limited to their ability to serve in the army: "I hope," said Dunmore, "it will oblige the rebels to disperse to take care of their families and property." The men to whose passions he appealed were either criminals, bound to labor in expiation of their misdeeds, or barbarians, some of them freshly imported from Africa, with tropical passions seething in their veins, and frames rendered strong by abundant food and out of door toil; they formed the majority of the population on tide-water, and were distributed among the lonely plantations in clusters around the wives and children of their owners; so that danger lurked in every home. The measure was a very deliberate act, which had been reported in advance to the ministry, and had appeared an "encouraging" one to the king; it formed part of a system which Dunmore had concerted with General Gage and General Howe. He also sent for the small detachment of regulars stationed in Illinois and the northwest; he commissioned Mackee, a deputy superintendent, to raise a regiment

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CHAP. of Indians among the savages of Ohio and the west-  
LV. ern border; he authorized John Connolly to raise a  
775. regiment in the backwoods of Virginia and Pennsyl-  
Nov. vania; and he directed these different bodies to march  
to Alexandria. At the same time he was himself to  
“raise two regiments, one of white people, to be called  
the Queen’s Own Loyal Virginia regiment; the other  
of negroes, to be called Lord Dunmore’s Ethiopian  
regiment.” Connolly was arrested in Maryland in  
November; and thus the movements at the west were  
prevented.

At Dunmore’s proclamation a thrill of indignation ran through Virginia, effacing all differences of party, and rousing one strong impassioned purpose to drive away the insolent power by which it had been put forth. Instead of a regiment on the king’s side from the backwoods, William Campbell and Gibson were on the march from Fincastle and West Augusta, with patriotic rifle companies, composed of “as fine men as ever were seen.” In the valley of the Blue Ridge the different congregations of Germans, quickened by the preaching of Muhlenberg, were animated with one heart, and stood ready at the first summons to take up arms for the defence of the men of the low country, regardless of their different lineage and tongue.

The general congress promptly invited Virginia, as it had invited New Hampshire and South Carolina, to institute a government of her own; and this was of the greater moment, because she was first in wealth, and numbers, and extent of territory.

“If that man is not crushed before spring,” wrote Washington of Dunmore, “he will become the most formidable enemy of America. Motives of resent-

ment actuate his conduct to a degree equal to the total destruction of Virginia. His strength will increase as a snowball by rolling, and faster, if some expedient cannot be hit upon to convince the slaves and servants of the impotency of his designs." The Virginians could plead and did plead that "their assemblies had repeatedly attempted to prevent the horrid traffic in slaves, and had been frustrated by the cruelty and covetousness of English merchants, who prevailed on the king to repeal their merciful acts; that the English encouraged and upheld slavery, while the present masters of negroes in Virginia pitied their condition, wished in general to make it easy and comfortable, and would willingly not only prevent any more negroes from losing their freedom, but restore it to such as had already unhappily lost it;" and they foresaw that whatever they themselves might suffer from a rising, the weight of sorrow would fall on the insurgent slaves.

But, in truth, the cry of Dunmore did not rouse among the Africans a passion for freedom. To them bondage in Virginia was not a lower condition of being than their former one; they had no regrets for ancient privileges lost; their memories prompted no demand for political changes; no struggling aspirations of their own had invited Dunmore's interposition; no memorial of their grievances had preceded his offers. What might have been accomplished, had he been master of the country, and used an undisputed possession to embody and train the negroes, cannot be told; but as it was, though he boasted that they flocked to his standard, none combined to join him from a longing for an improved condition, or even from ill will to their masters.

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The innumerable affinities which had united the people with the British government, still retained great force; a vague dread of taking up arms against their sovereign pervaded the mind of the common people; none had as yet renounced allegiance; after the success at Kemp's Landing, nearly a hundred of the men who were in the field the day before came in and took the oath of allegiance which Dunmore had framed; and in the following three weeks it was accepted by nearly three thousand: but of these less than three or four hundred could bear arms, of which not half so many knew the use. Norfolk was almost entirely deserted by native Virginians, and was become the refuge of the Scotch, who, as the factors of Glasgow merchants, had long regulated the commercial exchanges of the colony. Loyal to the crown, they were now embodied as the militia of Norfolk. The patriots resolved to take the place.

On the twenty eighth of November the Virginian forces under Woodford, consisting of his own regiment and five companies of the Culpepper minutemen, with whom John Marshall, afterwards chief justice of the United States, served as a lieutenant, marched to the Great Bridge, and threw up a breast-work on the side opposite to the British fort. They had no arms but the musket and the rifle; the fort was strong enough to withstand musket-shot; they therefore made many attempts to cross the branch on a raft, that they might attack their enemy in the rear; but they were always repulsed. Should the fort be given up, the road to Norfolk was open to the victors; in the dilemma between his weakness and his danger, Dunmore resolved to risk an attempt to fall on the



Virginians by surprise. On Friday, the eighth of December, after dark, he sent about two hundred men, composed of all that had arrived of the fourteenth regiment, and of officers, sailors, and gunners from the ships, mixed with townsmen of Norfolk. They arrived at the Great Bridge in the night, and halted for rest and refreshment. The Virginians could be approached only over a causeway of about one hundred and sixty yards in length, at the end of which was their breastwork. After the break of day, and before sunrise, Leslie planted two fieldpieces between the bridge and the causeway, and gave orders for the attack; but the Virginians had just beat the reveille, and at the first discharge of the cannon, the bravest of them, unmindful of order, rushed to the trenches. The regulars, about one hundred and twenty in number, led by Fordyce, a captain in the fourteenth, were met on the causeway by a well-directed fire; while Stevens, with a party of the Culpepper minute men, posted on an eminence about a hundred yards to the left, took them in flank: they wavered; Fordyce, with a courage which was the admiration of all beholders, rallied and led them on, when, struck with many rifle-balls, some say fourteen, he staggered and fell dead, within a few steps of the breastwork, or according to one account, having had his hand upon it. The two companies of negroes kept out of the way; so did the loyalists of Norfolk; the regulars displayed the conduct of the bravest veterans; but discouraged by the fall of their leader, and disabled by the incessant fire of the American sharpshooters, they retreated, after a struggle of about fourteen minutes, losing at least sixty-one in killed and wounded.

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After the firing was over, the Virginians, who lost not one man, and had but one slightly wounded, ran to bring in those of their enemies who needed the surgeon's aid. "For God's sake, don't murder us," cried one of the sufferers, who had been taught to fear the scalpingknife. "Put your arm round my neck," replied the Virginian, lifting him up, and walking with him slowly and carefully to the breastwork. When Leslie saw two of the "shirtmen" tenderly removing a wounded soldier from the bridge, he stepped upon the platform of the fort, and bowing with great respect, thanked them for their compassion. Fordyce was buried by the Virginians with all the honors due from a generous enemy to his unsurpassed gallantry. A rash adviser urged Woodford to attack the fort with muskets alone; but Pendleton had charged him "to risk the success of his arms as little as possible;" and he wisely put aside the proposal.

In the following night, Leslie, dejected by the loss of his nephew in the fight, abandoned the fort and retreated to Norfolk. Nothing could exceed the consternation of its Scotch inhabitants: rich factors, with their wives and children, leaving their large property behind, betook themselves on board ships, in midwinter, with scarcely the necessaries of life. Crowds of poor people and the runaway negroes were huddled together in the ships of war and other vessels, destitute of every comfort and even of pure air.

On the eleventh, Robert Howe, of North Carolina, arrived at the Great Bridge, and on the fourteenth he, as the higher officer, took possession of Norfolk. On the twenty first the Liverpool ship of war and the brig Maria were piloted into the harbor.

They brought three thousand stand of arms, with which Dunmore had promised to embody negroes and Indians enough to reduce all Virginia to submission. Martin of North Carolina despatched a tender to claim his part of the arms, and a thousand were made over to him.

The governor sent a flag of truce on shore to inquire if he and the fleet might be supplied with fresh provisions; and was answered in the negative. Showing his instructions to Belew, the captain of the Liverpool, who now commanded the king's ships in the Chesapeake, the two concurred in opinion, that Norfolk was "a town in actual rebellion, accessible to the king's ships;" and they prepared to carry out the king's instructions for such "a case."

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## CHAPTER LVI.

THE NEW YEAR. 1776.

JANUARY, 1776.

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NEW-YEAR's day, 1776, was the saddest day that ever broke on the women and children then in Norfolk. Warned of their danger by the commander of the squadron, there was for them no refuge. The King Fisher was stationed at the upper end of Norfolk; a little below her the Otter; Belew, in the Liverpool, anchored near the middle of the town; and next him lay Dunmore; the rest of the fleet was moored in the harbor. Between three and four in the afternoon the Liverpool opened its fire upon the borough; the other ships immediately followed the example, and a severe cannonade was begun from about sixty pieces of cannon. Dunmore then himself, as night was coming on, ordered out several boats to burn warehouses on the wharfs; and hailed to Belew to set fire to a large brig which lay in the dock. All the vessels of the fleet, to show their zeal, sent great numbers of boats on shore to assist in spreading the



flames along the river; and as the buildings were chiefly of pine wood, the conflagration, favored by the wind, spread with amazing rapidity, and soon became general. Women and children, mothers with little ones in their arms, were seen by the glare, running through the shower of cannonballs to get out of their range. Two or three persons were hit; and the scene became one of extreme horror and confusion. Several times the British attempted to land, and once to bring cannon into a street; but they were driven back by the spirit and conduct of the Americans. The cannonade did not abate till ten at night; after a short pause it was renewed, but with less fury, and was kept up till two the next morning. The flames, which had made their way from street to street, raged for three days, till four fifths, or, as some computed, nine tenths, of the houses were reduced to ashes and heaps of ruins.

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In this manner the royal governor burned and laid waste the best town in the oldest and most loyal colony of England, to which Elizabeth had given a name, and Raleigh devoted his fortune, and Shakespeare and Bacon and Herbert foretokened greatness; a colony where the people of themselves had established the church of England, and where many were still proud that their ancestors, in the day of the British commonwealth, had been faithful to the line of kings. On second thought, Dunmore feared he had done too much, and he insinuated that the "great number of boats" from his fleet had set fire only to the buildings nearest the water: but a fire kindled in many places along the outer row of houses built chiefly of pine, could extend itself with irresistible fury. Who can

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affirm or who can deny, that mischievous persons on shore may not have found amusement in feeding the flames? But the American commanders, Howe and Woodford, certainly made every effort to arrest them; and troops without tents would hardly in midwinter have burned down the houses that were their only shelter.

When Washington learned the fate of the rich emporium of his own "country," for so he called Virginia, his breast heaved with waves of anger and grief; "I hope," said he, "this, and the threatened devastation of other places, will unite the whole country in one indissoluble band against a nation, which seems lost to every sense of virtue, and those feelings which distinguish a civilized people from the most barbarous savages."

On the first day of January, 1776, the tri-colored American banner, not yet spangled with stars, but showing thirteen stripes of alternate red and white in the field, and the united red and white crosses of Saint George and Saint Andrew on a blue ground in the corner, was unfurled over the new continental army round Boston, which, at that moment of its greatest weakness, consisted of but nine thousand six hundred and fifty men.

On that day free negroes stood in the ranks by the side of white men. In the beginning of the war they had entered the provincial army; the first general order, which was issued by Ward, had required a return, among other things, of "the complexion" of the soldiers; and black men, like others, were retained in the service after the troops were adopted by the continent. We have seen Edward Rutledge defeated in

his attempt to compel their discharge; in October, the conference at the camp, with Franklin, Harrison, and Lynch, thought it proper to exclude them from the new enlistment; but Washington, at the crisis of his distress, finding that they were very much dissatisfied at being discarded, took the responsibility of reversing the decision; and referred the subject to congress. That body appointed Wythe, Samuel Adams, and Wilson, to deliberate on the question; and on the report of their able committee they voted, "that the free negroes who had served faithfully in the army at Cambridge, might be reenlisted therein, but no others." The right of free negroes to take part in the defence of the country having thus been definitively established by the competent tribunal, they served in the ranks of the American armies during every period of the war.

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The enlistments were embarrassed by the low state of Washington's military chest. He could neither pay off the old army to the last of December, when their term expired, nor give assurances for the punctual pay of the militia. At one time in January he had but about ten thousand dollars at Cambridge; and that small sum was held in reserve. It would have been good policy to have paid a large bounty and engaged recruits for the war; but this measure congress refused to warrant; and it was left to the government of Massachusetts, with the aid of the rest of New England, to keep up the numbers of the army while it remained on her soil. For that end five thousand of her militia were summoned to the field.

The army officers of Massachusetts had instilled into the mind of Washington a dread of calling in the

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minute-men and militia, lest they should destroy the little subordination he had been laboring to establish, and refuse to remain a moment longer than they themselves might choose. The result dispelled his fears; and on the nineteenth of December, 1775, he wrote to congress: "The militia that are come in both from this province and New Hampshire are very fine looking men, and go through their duty with great alacrity. The despatch made both by the people in marching, and the legislative powers in complying with my requisition, has given me infinite satisfaction." But the neglect of congress had reduced his army to a state of disintegration by their dilatory and inadequate provision for new enlistments. The troops before Boston were a mixture of transient militia whose frequent mutation called for a constant renewal of elementary instruction, and new recruits. There was a dearth of bayonets, a want of at least two thousand muskets; the artillery was poor, and was chiefly a gathering from accidental sources. There was no store of powder. There was no money in the military chest, for the persons designated to sign the bills were too indolent to act with promptness. Some members of congress were specially eager to give profitable occupation to ship-builders among their constituents, and, with a strange perversity, what little powder was obtained was withheld from Washington for vessels which could not be prepared for sea before more ample stores would arrive. They refused to consider that Washington's inactivity was due in part to themselves, in part to causes, which, anxious as he was "to keep above water in the esteem of mankind," he was compelled



to conceal from the public, from his friends, and even from most of his officers. Yet the chimney-corner heroes among the legislators grew impatient at the slowness of the war, and, after a long and serious debate, on the twenty second carried a resolution authorizing Washington "to attack Boston in any manner which he might deem expedient, notwithstanding the town might thereby be destroyed." In forwarding the resolve, Hancock announced it as having been adopted after a long and most serious debate, and added: "May God crown your attempt with success. I most heartily wish it, though individually I may be the greatest sufferer."

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Receiving what was plainly a direction to attack the British forces in spite of his want of arms, ammunition, and money, and in the moment of his greatest perplexity from deficiencies and changes of men, Washington, for the first time in his military career,<sup>1</sup> was compelled to show the spirit with which he encountered a complication of difficulties. Repelling the accusation of inactivity, he answered the superior civil power with dignity: "It is not perhaps in the pages of history to furnish a case like ours: to maintain a post within musket-shot of the enemy for six months together without powder, and at the same time to disband one army and recruit another within that distance of twenty odd British regiments, is more, probably, than ever was attempted." But the order of congress was never out of his mind; and when his army was reorganized, and the shallow bay west of Boston was frozen over, on the sixteenth of February, he called together his general officers, as his instructions required of

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<sup>1</sup> Wiebke: Die ersten Jahre des Freiheitskrieges, 169.

CHAP. him, and urged them to sanction a general assault on  
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men, who were accustomed to fight from behind defences, would encounter the enemy with unflinching courage on open ground. But the brigadiers had discoursed on the subject with the field-officers of the regiments, and had found them reluctant; the council of war disapproved the proposal as exceedingly hazardous, and advised only to prepare for taking possession of Dorchester hill, with a view of drawing out the enemy. Washington reported to congress the almost unanimous overruling of his opinion by his military advisers, and added for himself: "I was ready, willing, and desirous of making the assault, under a firm hope, if the men would have stood by me, of a favorable result."

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His situation was irksome; the whole continent was anxiously expecting some great event, and he was restrained by the want of the means necessary for any military operation. The state of his army gave him many an uneasy hour when all around him were wrapped in sleep; and he often considered how much happier would have been his lot, if, instead of accepting the chief command, he had taken his musket on his shoulder, and entered the ranks. "In the worst event," said he, "my lands on the Ohio will serve for an asylum." Could he have justified the measure to posterity and his own conscience, he would gladly have retired at once to the backwoods, even though it had been to live in a wigwam; but he never countenanced the thought of sending back his commission to his hard task-masters. If he had not consulted the public good more than his own tranquillity, he would have put every thing on the cast of a die, and forced a

battle at every disadvantage. The world gave him credit for an army of twenty thousand well armed men; and yet at the moment when Howe was receiving reenforcements, he had been left with less than half that number, including the sick, those on furlough, those on command, and those who were neither properly armed nor clothed. "For more than two months past," said he, "I have scarcely emerged from one difficulty before I have been plunged into another; how it will end, God in his great goodness will direct; I am thankful for his protection to this time."

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In June of the preceding year, when Lord North communicated his proposition as the ultimatum of British justice, Washington would have had it received as such, and would have acted accordingly; on the echo from England of the battle of Bunker Hill, he saw that every hope of accommodation was delusive; the new year brought the king's speech to parliament in November, and he no longer held back his opinion that independence should be declared. Those around him shared his resolution; Greene wrote to his friend Ward, a delegate from Rhode Island to the general congress: "The interests of mankind hang upon that body of which you are a member: you stand the representative not of America only, but of the friends of liberty and the supporters of the rights of human nature in the whole world; permit me from the sincerity of my heart, ready at all times to bleed in my country's cause, to recommend a declaration of independence, and call upon the world and the great God who governs it, to witness the necessity, propriety, and rectitude thereof. The king," he

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said further, "breathes revenge, and threatens us with destruction: America must raise an empire of permanent duration, supported upon the grand pillars of truth, freedom, and religion."

The popular mind was more and more agitated with a silent, meditative feeling of independence. The old affection for England remained paramount till the king's proclamation declared them rebels; then the new conviction demanded utterance; and as the debates in congress were secret, it had no outlet but the press.

The writer who embodied in words the vague longing of the country, mixed up with some crude notions of his own, was Thomas Paine, a literary adventurer, at that time a little under forty years of age; the son of a Quaker of Norfolk in England, brought up in the faith of George Fox and Penn, the only school in England where he could have learned the principles which he was now to defend, and which it seemed a part of his nature to assert. He had been in America not much more than a year, but in that time he had cultivated the society of Franklin, Rittenhouse, Clymer, and Samuel Adams; his essay, when finished, was shown to Franklin, to Rittenhouse, to Samuel Adams, and to Rush; and Rush gave it the title of COMMON SENSE.

"The design and end of government," it was reasoned, "is freedom and security. In the early ages of the world, mankind were equals in the order of creation; the heathen introduced government by kings, which the will of the Almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disap-



proved. To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a lessening of ourselves, so the second might put posterity under the government of a rogue or a fool. Nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule. England, since the conquest, hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones.

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"The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favor of hereditary succession is, that it preserves a nation from civil wars; whereas the whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there have been no less than eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. In short, monarchy and succession have laid not this kingdom only, but the world, in blood and ashes.

"The nearer any government approaches to a republic, the less business there is for a king; in England a king hath little more to do than to make war and give away places.

"Volumes have been written on the struggle between England and America, but the period of debate is closed. Arms must decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

"The sun never shone on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent, of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in it, even to the end of time.

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“But Great Britain has protected us, say some. She did not protect us from our enemies on our account, but from her enemies on her own account. America would have flourished as much, and probably more, had no European power had any thing to do with governing her. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as Americans, but as the subjects of Great Britain.

“Britain is the parent country, say some; then the more shame upon her conduct. But Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America: this new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. The phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, is false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous; but admitting that we were all of English descent, Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name.

“Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. What have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the friendship of all Europe. I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain.

“As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European

contentions, which she never can do, while by her dependence on Britain she is the makeweight in the scale of British politics.

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“Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of heaven. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she does not conquer herself by delay and timidity.

“It is repugnant to reason and the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose that this continent can long remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain do not think so. The authority of Great Britain, sooner or later, must have an end; and the event cannot be far off. The business of this continent, from its rapid progress to maturity, will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us. There is something absurd in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island: in no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than the primary planet. They belong to different systems; England to Europe, America to itself. Every thing short of independence is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time when going a little further would render this continent the glory of the earth. Admitting that matters were now made up, the king will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent. And he will suffer no law to be made

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here but such as suits his purpose. We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England.

“Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related. The best terms which we can expect to obtain can amount to no more than a guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age. Emigrants of property will not come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread. Nothing but a continental form of government can keep the peace of the continent inviolate from civil wars.

“The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head; if there is any true cause of fear respecting independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Let a continental conference be held, to frame a continental charter, or charter of the united colonies. But where, say some, is the king of America? He reigns above; in America the law is king; in free countries there ought to be no other.

“All men, whether in England or America, confess that a separation between the countries will take place one time or other. To find out the very time, we need not go far, for the time hath found us. The present, likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a nation but once, the time of forming itself into a government. Until we consent that the seat of government in America be legally and authoritatively occupied, where will be our freedom? where our property?

“Nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for indepen



dence. It is unreasonable to suppose that France or Spain will give us assistance, if we mean only to use that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach. While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must in the eyes of foreign nations be considered as rebels. A manifesto published and despatched to foreign courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and declaring that we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connection with her, at the same time assuring all such courts of our desire of entering into trade with them, would produce more good effects to this continent, than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

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“Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual; our prayers have been rejected with disdain; reconciliation is now a fallacious dream. Bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature; can you hereafter love, honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? Ye that tell us of harmony, can ye restore to us the time that is past? The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'tis time to part. The last chord is now broken; the people of England are presenting addresses against us.

“A government of our own is our natural right. Ye that love mankind, that dare oppose not only tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression; Freedom hath been hunted round the globe; Europe regards her like a stranger; and England hath given her warning to depart: O! receive the fugitive, and prepare an asylum for mankind.”

The publication of “Common Sense,” which was

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brought out on the eighth of January, was most opportune; the day before, the general congress had heard of the burning of Norfolk; on the day itself, the king's speech at the opening of parliament arrived. "The tyrant!" said Samuel Adams; "his speech breathes the most malevolent spirit; and determines my opinion of its author as a man of a wicked heart. I have heard that he is his own minister; why, then, should we cast the odium of distressing mankind upon his minions? Guilt must lie at his door; divine vengeance will fall on his head;" and, with the aid of Wythe of Virginia, the patriot set vigorously to work to bring on a confederation and independence.

The friends of the proprietary government stood in the way. The pamphlet of "Common Sense," which came suddenly into every one's hands, was written outside of their influence; and its doctrines threatened their overthrow. On the day after its publication, Wilson, to arrest the rapid development of opinion, came to congress with the king's speech in his hand, and quoting from it the words which charged the colonists with aiming at a separation, he moved the appointment of a committee to explain to their constituents and to the world the principles and grounds of their opposition, and their present intentions respecting independence. He was strongly supported. On the other hand, Samuel Adams insisted that congress had already been explicit enough; and apprehensive that they might get themselves upon dangerous ground, he rallied the bolder members in the hope to defeat the proposal; but in the absence of John Adams even his colleagues, Cushing and Paine, sided with Wilson, and carried the

vote of Massachusetts as a part of his majority. When Cushing's constituents heard of his pusillanimous wavering, they elected Elbridge Gerry to his place; at the moment, Samuel Adams repaired for sympathy and consolation to Franklin. In a free conversation, these two great sons of Boston agreed that confederation must be speedily brought on, even though the concurrence of all the colonies could not be obtained. "If none of the rest will join," said Samuel Adams to Franklin, "I will endeavor to unite the New England colonies in confederating." "I approve your proposal," said Franklin, "and if you succeed, I will cast in my lot among you."

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But even in New-England the actors who obeyed the living oracles of freedom wrought in darkness and in doubt; to them the formation of a new government was like passing through death to life. The town of Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, disavowed the intention of separating from the parent country; the convention of that colony, which was the first to frame a government of its own, remembered their comparative weakness, and modestly shrunk from giving the example of a thorough change: they retained their old forms of a house of representatives and a council; they provided no substitute for their governor who had fled, but merged the executive power in the two branches of the legislature; and they authorized the continuance of the new constitution only during "the unnatural contest with Great Britain, protesting that they had never sought to throw off their dependence, and that they would rejoice in such a conciliation as the continental congress should approve."

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In Massachusetts, the hope of an accommodation with the mother country still haunted the moderate party; but the leaders of opinion said that they would not consent to treat at all, unless the British commissioners should bring powers to treat with congress. John Adams, who was then at home, declared his zeal for carrying on hostilities, even without the assistance of the southern colonies, if New York would adhere to New England.

The convention of Maryland voted unhesitatingly to put the province in a state of defence; but moved by a sense of the mildness with which their proprietary government had been administered, on the eleventh day of January they bore their testimony to the equity of the English constitution, sanctioned no military operations but for protection, and forbade their delegates in congress to assent to any proposition for independence, foreign alliance, or confederation.

Moreover Lord Drummond, who represented a large proprietary interest in New Jersey, came to Philadelphia, and exhibited a paper which, as he pretended, had been approved by each of the ministers, and which promised freedom to America in point of taxation and internal police, and the restoration of the charter of Massachusetts. Lynch, a delegate of South Carolina, who had written to the north that John Adams should be watched because his intentions might be wicked, was duped by his arts, and thought even of recommending his proposals to the consideration of congress. Besides, it was expected by many, that agents, selected from among the friends of America, would be sent from England with full powers to grant every reasonable measure of redress.



It was time for Franklin to speak out, for he best knew the folly of expecting peace from British commissioners. On the sixteenth his plan of a confederacy was called up, and he endeavored to get a day fixed for its consideration; but he was opposed by Hooper and by Dickinson, and they carried the question against him. Four days later, the Quakers of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, at a meeting of their representatives in Philadelphia, published their testimony that the setting up and putting down of kings and governments is God's peculiar prerogative. Yet the votes of congress showed a fixed determination to continue the struggle; twenty seven battalions were ordered to be raised in addition to those with Washington; it was intended to send ten thousand men into Canada; Arnold, on the motion of Gadsden, was unanimously appointed a brigadier general; powder and saltpetre began to be received in large quantities, and the establishment of powdermills was successfully encouraged. The expenditures authorized for the purposes of the war for the year, were computed at ten millions of dollars; and at the same time the several colonies lavished away their treasure on special military preparations.

In New Jersey the letters of the royal governor were intercepted; and their tenor was so malignant that Lord Stirling placed him under arrest. In Georgia the people were elated with their seeming security. "Twelve months ago," said they, "we were declared rebels, and yet we meet with no opposition; Britain may destroy our towns, but we can retire to the back country and tire her out." On the appearance of a small squadron in the Savannah, Joseph

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Habersham, on the eighteenth of January, raised a party of volunteers, took Sir Joseph Wright prisoner, and confined him under a guard in his own house. The other crown officers either fled or were seized. After an imprisonment of more than three weeks, the governor escaped by night, went by land to Bonaventure, and was rowed through Tybee Creek to the Scarborough man-of-war. "Georgia," said he, "is now totally under the influence of the Carolina people; nothing but force can pave the way for the commissioners."

When the Virginia convention, which had been in session from the first of December, heard of the burning of Norfolk, and considered that the naval power of England held dominion over the waters of the Chesapeake, they resolved to give up its shores to waste and solitude, promising indemnity to the sufferers. The commanding officer, by their order, after assisting the inhabitants in removing with their effects, demolished in Norfolk and its suburbs all remaining houses which "might be useful to their enemies," and then abandoned the scene of devastation.

For the defence of the rest of Virginia the two regiments already in service were increased, and it was ordained that seven more should be raised. Of one of these, Hugh Mercer was elected colonel; the command of another, to be composed of Germans from the glades of the Blue Ridge, was given to the Lutheran minister, Peter Muhlenberg, who left the pulpit for the army, and formed out of the men of his several congregations one of the most perfect battalions in the American army.

Colonial dependence had ever been identified

with restraints on trade in the minds of European statesmen, who would have regarded an invitation from the colonies to the world to share their commerce as an act of independence; the continental congress had interfered with the old restraints on foreign trade as little as the necessity for purchasing military stores would permit; they had, moreover, with few exceptions, suspended alike importations and exportations, so that New England, for example, could not export fish to Spain, even to exchange it for powder; the impulse for a world-wide commerce came from Virginia. On Saturday, the twentieth of January, on motion of Archibald Cary, her convention gave its opinion in favor of opening the ports of the colonies to all persons willing to trade with them, Great Britain, Ireland, and the British West Indies excepted, and instructed her delegates in the general congress to use their endeavors to have such a measure adopted, so soon as exportation from North America should be permitted. That this recommendation should have been left after ten months of war to be proposed by a provincial convention, is another evidence of the all but invincible attachment of the colonies to England.

Thus the progress of the war necessarily brought to America independence in all but the name; she had her treasury, her army, the rudiments of a navy, incipient foreign relations, and a striving after free commerce with the world. She was self-existent, whether she would be so or no; through no other way would the king allow her to hope for rest.

The declaration of independence was silently but steadily prepared in the convictions of all the people;

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just as every spire of grass is impearled by the dews of heaven, and assists to reflect the morning sun. The many are more sagacious, more disinterested, more courageous, than the few. Language was their spontaneous creation; the science of ethics, as the word implies, is deduced from the inspirations of their conscience; the greatest jurists have perceived that law itself is necessarily moulded and developed from their inward nature; the poet embodies in words their oracles and their litanies; the philosopher draws ideal thought from the storehouse of their mind; the national heart is the great reservoir of noble resolutions and of high, enduring designs. It was the common people, whose craving for the recognition of the unity of the universe and for a perfect mediator between themselves and the Infinite, bore the Christian religion to its triumph over every worldly influence; it was the public faith, that, in the days of the reformation, sought abstract truth behind forms that had been abused, and outward acts that had lost their significance; and now the popular desire was once more the voice of the harbinger, crying in the wilderness. The people had grown weary of atrophied institutions, and longed to fathom the mystery of the life of the public life. Instead of continuing a superstitious reverence for the sceptre and the throne, as the symbols of order, they yearned for a nearer converse with the eternal rules of right, as the generative principles of social peace.

The spirit of the people far outran conventions and congresses. Reid, among Scottish metaphysicians, and Chatham, the foremost of British statesmen, had discovered in COMMON SENSE the criterion of



morals and truth; the common sense of the people now claimed its right to sit in judgment on the greatest question ever raised in the political world. But here as elsewhere, the decision rose out of the affections; all the colonies, as though they had been but one individual being, felt themselves wounded to the soul, when they heard and could no longer doubt, that George the Third was hiring foreign mercenaries to reduce them to subjection.

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## CHAPTER LVII.

### BRITAIN ENGAGES FOREIGN TROOPS.

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HAD the king employed none but British troops, the war by land against the colonies must have been of short duration. His army was largely recruited from American loyalists ; from emigrants driven to America by want, and too recently arrived to be imbued with its principles ; from Ireland, and the Highlands of Scotland ; and from Germany. Treaties were also made for subsidiary troops.

When Sir Joseph Yorke, the British ambassador at The Hague, proposed the transfer of a brigade from the service of the Netherlands to that of his sovereign, the young stadtholder wrote directly to his cousin the king of England, to decline what was desired. He received a reply, renewing and urging the request. In 1599 the Low Countries pledged to Queen Elizabeth, as security for a loan, three important fortresses, which she garrisoned with her own troops ; in 1616 the Dutch discharged the debt, and

the garrisons were withdrawn from the cautionary towns except an English and a Scottish brigade, which passed into the service of the confederacy. William the Third recalled the former ; and in 1749 the privilege of recruiting in Scotland was withdrawn from the latter, of which the rank and file, now consisting of more than twenty one hundred men, were of all nations, though its officers were still Scotchmen or their descendants. In favor of the loan of the troops, it was urged, that the officers already owed allegiance to the British king, and were therefore well suited to enter his service ; that common interests and intimate relations existed between the two countries ; that the present occasion offered to the prince of Orange "the unique advantage and particular honor" of strengthening the bonds of close friendship which had been "more or less enfeebled" by the neutrality of the United Provinces during the last French war.

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In the states general, Zealand and Utrecht consented ; the province of Holland objected, that a commercial state should never but from necessity become involved in any quarrel. Baron van der Capellen tot den Pol, one of the nobles of Overijssel, the Gracchus of the Dutch republic, protested against the measure, on principles which were to increase in strength, and to influence the impending revolution in Europe. He reasoned, that furnishing the troops would be a departure from the true policy of the strictest neutrality ; that his country had fruitlessly sacrificed her prosperity to advance the greatness of England ; that she had shed rivers of blood under pretence of establishing a balance of power, and had only strengthened an empire which was now assuming

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a more dreadful monarchy over the seas than ever had been known; that she would find herself, as formerly, engaged in a baleful war with France, her most powerful neighbor and her natural ally in the defence of the liberty of commerce; that a war between Britain and France would bring advantage to the navigation of the republic, if she would but maintain her neutrality; that she had never derived any benefit from a close alliance with England; that, in the war of succession which gave to that power the key to the Mediterranean, she had nothing for her share but the total waste of her forces and her treasure; that she had religiously observed her treaties, and yet England denied her the stipulated safety of merchandise in free bottoms, and searched and arbitrarily confiscated her ships. Besides, janizaries should be hired to subdue the colonists, rather than the troops of a free state. Why should a nation who have themselves borne the title of rebels and freed themselves from oppression by the edge of their swords, employ their troops in crushing what some were pleased to call a rebellion of the Americans, who yet were an example and encouragement to all nations, worthy of the esteem of the whole world as brave men, defending with moderation and with intrepidity the rights which God and not the British legislature gave them as men!

These ideas, once set in motion, were sure to win the day; but the states of Overijssel suppressed all explicit declarations against England; and the states general, wishing to avoid every appearance of offensive discourtesy, at last consented to lend the brigade, but only on the condition that it never should



be used out of Europe. This was in fact a refusal; the brigade was never accepted by the English, who, during the tardy course of the discussion, had obtained supplies of men from Germany. CHAP.  
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That empire had never recovered from the disorganization occasioned by the thirty years' war, when military service became a trade, and mercenary troops took the place of lieges, till the more efficient system of standing armies superseded the use of adventurers. In this way the mediæval liberties disappeared; in the great monarchies, the people by their numbers formed a counterpoise to absolute monarchy: in the smaller principalities the weight of the commons was insufficient to bear up against their rulers; the sentiment of patriotism was merged in the obedience of the soldier, who learned that he had a master, but not that he had a country; and electors and landgraves and reigning dukes assumed the right of engaging in wars for their personal profit, and hiring out their troops according to their own pleasure. The custom became so general, that, for the gain of their princes, and pay and plunder for themselves, German troops were engaged in every great contest that raged from Poland to Lisbon, from the North Sea to Naples; and were sometimes arrayed in the same battle on opposite sides. At the return of peace the disbanded supernumeraries lounged about, forming an unemployed body, from which the hope of high wages and booty could at any time raise up armed bands.

So soon as it became known that the king of England, unable to supply the losses in his regiments by enlistments within his own realm, desired to draw recruits from Germany, crowds of adventurers, eager

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to profit by his wants, volunteered to procure the levies he might need. He had scruples about accepting their offers, saying: "The giving commissions to German officers to get men, in plain English amounts to making me a kidnapper, which I cannot think a very honorable occupation;" but he consented that a contract should be made with a Hanoverian lieutenant colonel for raising four thousand recruits in Germany without loss of time; he granted also the use of his electoral dominions and that "assistance and support of his field marshal which was indispensably necessary to the execution of the undertaking."

In those days no reciprocal comity restrained the princes from tempting each other's soldiers to desert; and a larger bounty, higher wages, and the undefined prospect of amassing spoils in the "el dorado" of America, readily attracted the vagabond veterans of former wars to the British standard. The kings of France had long been accustomed, with the consent of the cantons, to raise troops in Switzerland, and had used the permission so freely, that the total sum of their Swiss levies in three hundred years, was computed at more than a million of men. The German diet had prohibited the system; the court of Vienna wrote to the free cities and several of the states of the empire, that "Great Britain had no more connection with the empire than Russia or Spain, neither of which powers was permitted to recruit within its limits," and ordered its ministers to obstruct the recruiting officers in the British service; yet the king's contractor was very soon ready with a small instalment of a hundred and fifty men, and promised rapid success when the enterprise should

get a little better into train. Moreover, the prince bishop of Liege and the elector of Cologne consented to shut their eyes to the presence of English agents, who also had recruiting stations in Neuwied and at Frankfort. The undertaking was prohibited by the laws of nations and of the empire; the British ministers therefore instructed their diplomatic representative at the small courts to give all possible aid to the execution of the service, but not officially to implicate his government. In this way levies were obtained to fill up British regiments, though in less numbers than had been hoped for.

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But the wants of the ministry required more considerable negotiations with German princes. It was hoped that the duke of Brunswick, if well disposed, could supply at least three thousand men, and the landgrave of Hesse Cassel five thousand; in November, 1775, Suffolk thus instructed Colonel Faucitt, the British agent: "Your point is to get as many as you can; I own to you my own hopes are not very sanguine in the business you are going upon; therefore the less you act ministerially before you see a reasonable prospect of succeeding, the better. Get as many men as you can; it will be much to your credit to procure the most moderate terms, though expense is not so much the object in the present emergency as in ordinary cases. Great activity is necessary, as the king is extremely anxious; and you are to send one of two messengers from each place, Brunswick and Cassel, the moment you know whether troops can be procured or not, without waiting for the proposal of terms."

There was no occasion for anxiety; more than

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"if the king will accept a regiment of six hundred men, composed of officers and soldiers, who, like their prince, will certainly demand nothing better than to find an opportunity of sacrificing themselves for his majesty." The offer was eagerly accepted.

On the twenty fourth of November, Faucitt, having received his instructions at Stade, set off on his mission; but the nights were so dark and the roads so bad, that it required five days to reach Brunswick.

Charles, the reigning duke, was at that time about sixty three. During the forty years of his rule, the spendthrift had squandered a loan of twelve millions of thalers, beside the millions of his revenue, on his Italian opera, his corps of French dancers, his theatre, journeys, mistresses, and gaming, his experiments in alchemy, but most of all on his little army, which now, in his decrepit age, it was his chief pride to review. Within the last three years, a new prime minister had improved the condition of his finances; at the same time, Prince Ferdinand, the heir apparent, had been admitted as co-regent. In 1764 Ferdinand had married Augusta, a sister of George the Third, receiving with her a dowry of eighty thousand pounds beside an annuity of eight thousand more, chargeable on the revenues of Ireland and Hanover. His education had been in part confided to Jerusalem, a clergyman who neither had the old fashioned faith, nor the modern want of it; and his governor had been indulgent to the vices of his youth. From Frederic of Prussia, his uncle, he adopted not disinterested nationality, but skepticism, with which he mixed



up enough of philanthropic sentiment to pass for a free thinker with ideas of liberalism and humanity. Stately in his appearance, a student of gestures and attitudes before the glass, he was profuse of bows and compliments, and affectedly polite. The color of his eye was a most beautiful blue, and its expression friendly and winning. He himself and those about him professed the strongest sense of the omnipotence of legitimate princes; he loved to rule, and required obedience; his wish was a command. Indifferent to his English wife, he was excessively sensual; keeping a succession of mistresses from the second year of his marriage to his death. He had courage, and just too much ability to be called insignificant; it was his pride to do his day's work properly; and he introduced economy into the public administration. Devoted to pleasure, yet indefatigable in labor, neither prodigal, nor despotic, nor ambitious, his great defect was that he had no heart, so that he was not capable of gratitude or love, nor true to his word, nor fixed in his principles, nor gifted with insight into character, nor possessed of discernment of military worth. He was a good secondary officer, priggishly exact in the mechanism of a regiment, but wholly unfit to plan a campaign or lead an army.

On the evening of Faucitt's arrival, he sought a conference with the hereditary prince, to whom he bore from the king a special letter. Ferdinand gave unreservedly his most cordial approbation to the British proposal, and promised his interposition with his father in its favor. The reigning duke, although he regretted to part with troops which were the only amusement of his old age, in the distressed state of

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It now remained for Faucitt to chaffer with Feronce, the Brunswick minister, on the price of the troops, which were to be ready early in the spring, to the number of four thousand infantry and three hundred light dragoons. These last were not wanted, but Faucitt accepted them, "rather than appear difficult." Sixty German dollars for each man was demanded as levy money; but thirty crowns banco, or about thirty four and a half of our dollars, was agreed upon. Every soldier who should be killed, was to be paid for at the rate of the levy money; and three wounded were to be reckoned as one killed. The date of the English pay was the next subject in dispute; Brunswick demanded that it should begin three months before the march of the troops, but acquiesced in the advance of two months' pay. On the question of the annual subsidy a wrangling was kept up for two days; when it was settled at sixty four thousand five hundred German crowns from the date of the signature of the treaty, and twice that sum for two years after the return of the troops to their own country.

Riedesel, a colonel in the duke's service, was selected for the command, and received the rank of a major general. He was a man of uprightness, honor, and activity, enterprising, and full of resources; fond of his profession, of which he had spared no pains to make himself master.

During the war, Brunswick furnished altogether five thousand seven hundred and twenty three mercenaries; a number equal to more than one sixth of the

able-bodied men in the principality. As a consequence, two of the battalions destined for the British service were a regular force; the rest, in disregard of promises, were eked out by undisciplined levies, old men, raw boys, and recruits kidnapped out of remote countries.

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It is just to inquire if conduct like that of Ferdinand was followed by a happy life and an honorable death. His oldest son died two years before him; two others of his sons were idiotic and blind; his oldest daughter was married to the brutal prince of Würtemberg, and perished in 1788. The same intimate relations which led George the Third to begin the purchase of mercenary troops with his brother-in-law, made him select Ferdinand's younger daughter, Caroline,—a woman brought up in the lewd atmosphere of her father's palace, accustomed to the company of his mistresses, and environed by licentiousness from her childhood,—to become, at the ripe age of twenty seven, the wife of the prince of Wales, and eventually a queen of Great Britain. As to the prince himself, in a battle where his incompetence as a commander assisted to bring upon Prussia a most disastrous defeat his eyes were shot away; a fugitive, deserted by mistress and friends, he refused to take food, and so died.

From Brunswick Faucitt hurried to Cassel, where his coming was expected by one who knew well the strait to which the British ministry was reduced. The town rises beautifully at the foot of a well wooded hill, and overlooks a fertile plain. The people of Hesse preserve the hardy and warlike character of its ancestral tribe, which the Romans could never van-

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quish. It was still a nation of soldiers, whose valor had been proved in all the battlefields of Europe. In the former century the republic of Venice had employed them against the Turks, and they had taken part in the siege of Athens.

The landgrave, Frederic the Second, was at that time about fifty six, and had ruled for nearly sixteen years. He had been carefully educated ; but his nature was coarse and brutish and obstinate. The wife of his youth, a daughter of George the Second, was the mildest and gentlest of her race ; yet she was forced to fly from his inhumanity to his own father for protection. At the age of fifty three he married again, but lived with his second consort on no better terms than with his first.

The landgrave had been scrupulously educated in the Reformed church, of which the house of Hesse had ever proudly regarded itself as a bulwark ; but he piqued himself on having disburdened his mind of the prejudices of the vulgar ; sought to win Voltaire's esteem by doubting various narratives in the Bible ; and scoffed alike at the Old Testament and the New. In his view, Calvinism had died out even in Geneva ; and Luther, though commendable for having loved wine and women, was but an ordinary man ; he therefore turned Catholic in 1749, from dislike to the plebeian simplicity of the established worship of his people. He had learnt to favor toleration, to abolish the use of torture, and to make capital punishments exceedingly rare ; at the same time he was the coarse representative of the worst licentiousness of his age ; fond of splendor and luxurious living ; parading his vices publicly, with shameless indecorum. Having



no nationality, he sought to introduce French modes of life; had his opera, ballet-dancers, masquerades during the carnival, his French playhouse, a cast-off French coquette for his principal mistress, a French superintendent of theatres for his librarian. But nothing could be less like France than his court; life in Cassel was spiritless; "nobody here reads," said Forster; "the different ranks are stiffly separated," said the historian, Müller. Birth or wealth alone had influence: merit could not command respect, nor talent hope for fostering care.

To this man Faucitt delivered a letter from the British king. General Schlieffen, the minister with whom he was to conduct the negotiation, prepared him for unconditional acquiescence in every demand, by dwelling on the hazard of finding the landgrave in an unfavorable turn of mind, and describing him "as most exceedingly whimsical and uncertain in his humors and disposition;" at the same time he undertook to promise twelve thousand foot soldiers for service in America.

The prince, who would not confess even to his own mind that he sold his subjects from avarice, professed a strong desire to force the rebels back to their duty, and grew so warm and so sanguine that he seemed inclined, in the cause of monarchy, to head his troops in person. This zeal augured immoderate demands: his first extortion was a sum of more than forty thousand pounds for hospital disbursements during the last war. The demand was scandalous; the account had been liquidated, paid, and closed; but the distress of the government compelled a reconsideration of the claim, and the tribute was enforced.

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In conducting the bargain, the landgrave insisted on adhering to the beaten track of former conventions; and this predilection for precedents was not confined to mere formalities, but in every essential point was attended with an anxiety to collect and accumulate in the new treaty every favorable stipulation that had separately found its way into any of the old ones. The levy money appeared to be the same that was agreed upon with Brunswick; but as it was to be paid for the officers as well as for the men, the Hessian contract had an advantage of twenty per cent.

The master stroke of Schlieffen was the settlement of the subsidy. In no former convention had that condition extended over a less period than four years; the British minister objected to a demand for six, believing that one campaign would terminate the war; the Hessian, therefore, with seeming moderation, accepted a double subsidy, to be paid from the signature of the treaty to its expiration. Precedents were also found for stipulating that the subsidy should be paid not as by the treaty with Brunswick in German crowns, but in crowns banco, which made a further considerable gain to the landgrave; and as the engagement actually continued in force for about ten years, it proved very far more onerous than any which England had ever before negotiated, affording a clear net profit to the landgrave on this item alone of five millions of our dollars.

The taxes paid by the Hessians were sufficient to defray the pay rolls and all the expenses of the Hessian army; these taxes it had not been the custom to reduce; but on the present occasion, the landgrave, to give his faithful subjects proof of his paternal in-

clinations, most graciously suspended, from July to the time of the return of his troops, one half of the ordinary contribution to his military chest. The other half was rigorously exacted.

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It was stipulated that the British pay, which was higher than the Hessian, should be paid into the treasury of Hesse; and this afforded an opportunity for speculation in various ways. The pay rolls, after the first month, invariably included more persons than were in the service; with Brunswick, the price to be paid for the killed and wounded was fixed; the landgrave introduced no such covenant, and seemed left with the right to exact full pay for every man who had ever once been mustered into the British service, whether active or dead.

The British minister urged the indispensable necessity that the Hessian soldiers should be allowed as ample and extensive enjoyment of their pay as the British; "I dare not agree to any express or limited stipulation on this head," answered Schlieffen, "for fear of giving offence to the landgrave." "They are my fellow-soldiers," said the landgrave; "and do I not mean to treat them well?"

The sick and the wounded of the Brunswick troops were to be taken care of in the British hospitals; for the Hessians, the landgrave claimed the benefit of providing a hospital of his own.

The British ministers would gladly have clothed the mercenary troops in British manufactures; but the landgrave would not allow this branch of his profits to be impaired.

It had been thought in England that the landgrave could furnish no more than five thousand foot;

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but the price was so high, that, after contracting for twelve thousand, he further bargained to supply four hundred Hessian chasseurs, armed with rifle barrelled guns; and then three hundred dismounted dragoons; and then three corps of artillery; taking care for every addition to make a corresponding increase in the double subsidy.

To escape impressment, his subjects fled into Hanover; King George, who was also elector of Hanover, was therefore called upon "to discourage the elopement of Hessian subjects into that country, when the demand for men to enable the landgrave to fulfil his engagement with Great Britain was so pressing."

It was also thought essential to march the troops through the electorate to their place of embarkation, for it was not doubted, "if the Hessians were to march along the left bank of the Weser, through the territories of Prussia and perhaps half a score of petty princes, one half of them would be lost on the way by desertion." The other half went willingly, having been made to believe that America was the land of golden spoils, where they would have free license to plunder, and the unrestrained indulgence of their passions.

Every point in dispute having been decided according to the categorical demands of the landgrave, the treaty was signed on the thirty first day of January. This would have seemed definitive; but the payment of the double subsidy was to begin from the day of the signature of the treaty; the landgrave, therefore, put back the date of the instrument to January the fifteenth.

His troops were among the best in Europe; their



chief commander was Lieutenant general Heister, a brave old man of nearly sixty, cheerful in disposition, crippled with wounds, of a good understanding, but without genius for war; tenacious of authority, but good natured, bluntly honest, and upright. Next him stood Lieutenant general Knyphausen, remarkable for taciturnity and reserve; one of the best officers in the landgrave's service, of rare talents in his profession, with a kindly nature and the accomplishments of a man of honor.

The four major generals were all of moderate capacities and little military skill. Of the colonels, every one praised Donop, who commanded the four battalions of grenadiers and the chasseurs; Rall, Minigerode, Wurmb, and Loos, were also highly esteemed; four or five others had served with distinction.

The excuse of the British ministry for yielding to all the exactions of the landgrave, was their eagerness to obtain the troops early in February. "Often," wrote Suffolk, "as I have urged expedition, I must repeat it once more, nothing is so much to be guarded against as delay, which will mar the expected advantage." The landgrave freely consented that thirteen battalions should be prepared to march on the fifteenth of February; but so inefficient was the British ministry, so imperfect their concert, that though delay involved the loss of a campaign, the admiralty did not provide transports enough at the time appointed, and even in March could not tell when they would all be ready. The first detachment from Brunswick did not sail from England till the fourth of April, and Riedesel was at Quebec before the last

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were embarked; the first division of the Hessians did not clear the British channel till the tenth of May.

The transports were also very badly fitted up; the bedding furnished by the contractors was infamously scanty, their thin pillows being seven inches by five at most, and mattress, pillow, blanket, and rug, all together hardly weighing seven pounds. The clothing of the Brunswick troops was old, and only patched up for the present; "the person who executed the commission" for purchasing new shoes for them in England, sent "fine thin dancing pumps," and of these the greatest number were too small for use.

The treaty with the hereditary prince of Hesse Cassel, who was the ruler over Hanau, met with no obstacle. His eagerness and zeal were not to be described; he went in person round the different bailiwicks to choose the recruits that were wanted; and he accompanied his regiment as far as Frankfort on their way to Helvoetsluys. Conscious of the merit of all this devotion, he pressed for an additional special subsidy. Professing ostensibly to give a positive refusal, lest he should wake up similar claims, Suffolk in fact prepared to grant the demand, or some equivalent, under an injunction of the most absolute secrecy. The prince's minister reiterated in his name a written promise of preserving a discretion without bounds. "My attachment and most humble respect to the best of kings, my generous protector and magnanimous support, removes all idea of interest in me," wrote the prince himself. He wished that all the officers and soldiers of his regiment might be animated with a zeal like his own; and he addressed Suffolk in these words: "May the end they shall fight for

answer to the king's upper contentment, and your laudable endeavors, my lord, be granted by the most happiest issue." Suffolk, in reply, congratulated him on his hereditary knowledge of English.

For a few months it was doubted if the prince of Waldeck could make good his offers, for his land was already overtasked, as there were three Waldeck regiments in the service of Holland; the states of the principality had complained of the loss of its subjects; but the prince still pleaded such most disinterested zeal, and vowed so warm an attachment to the "incomparable monarch" of Britain, that on the twentieth of April the treaty with him was closed. He had no way of getting troops except by force, or authority, or deceit; but the village ministers from the pulpit encouraged the enlistment; and it was thought that an effective regiment would soon be ready, provided in the formation of it "he should not be too tender of his own subjects." The conscripts were quieted by promises of great wealth; but to prevent their deserting, a corps of mounted forest chasseurs escorted them to Beverungen.

The ruling prince of the house of Anhalt Zerbst, brother to Catharine, then empress of Russia, himself half crazed, living very rarely within his own dominions, keeping up sixteen recruiting stations outside of them, in a letter which from "the confusion in his style and in his expressions, could not be translated," made to England the offer of a regiment of six hundred and twenty-seven men. He also wrote directly to George the Third; but his manner was so strange, that the letter was not thought fit to be delivered. During that year nothing came of his proposal.

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The elector of Bavaria expressed to Elliot, the British minister at Ratisbon, his very strong desire of a subsidiary engagement; but little heed was given to this overture, for "the Bavarian troops were among the worst in Germany;" and besides, "the court was so sold to Austria and France, that the prince himself thought proper to warn the British diplomatist against speaking of the proposal to his own ministers."

On the last day of February, the treaties with Brunswick and Hesse were considered in the house of commons. Lord North said: "The troops are wanted; the terms on which they are procured, are less than we could have expected; the force will enable us to compel America to submission, perhaps without any further effusion of blood." He was answered by Lord John Cavendish: "The measure disgraces Britain, humiliates the king, and by its extravagance impoverishes the country." "Our business will be effected within the year," replied Cornwall; "and if so, of which there is no reason to doubt, the troops are all had on lower terms than was ever known before." Lord Irnham took a broader view: "The landgrave of Hesse and the duke of Brunswick render Germany vile and dishonored in the eyes of all Europe, as a nursery of men for those who have most money. Princes who thus sell their subjects, to be sacrificed in destructive wars, commit the additional crime of making them destroy much better and nobler beings than themselves. The landgrave of Hesse has his prototype in Sancho Panza, who said that if he were a prince, he should wish all his subjects to be blackamoors, so that he could



turn them into ready money by selling them." A warning voice was raised by Hartley: "You now set the American congress the example of applying to foreign powers; when they intervene, the possibility of reconciliation is totally cut off." The third son of the earl of Bute spoke for sanguinary measures, and contrasted the unrivalled credit of England with the weak, uncurrent paper of America. "The measures of ministers," said James Luttrell, who had served in America, "are death-warrants to thousands of British subjects, not steps towards regaining the colonies." George Grenville, afterwards Marquis of Buckingham, proposed the alternative: "Shall we abandon America, or shall we recover our sovereignty over that country? We had better make one effort more." Lord George Germain defended the treaties on the ground of necessity; this Lord Barrington confirmed, for British recruits could not be procured on any terms, and the bargain was the best that could be made. All complaints were ineffectual; the ministers were sustained by their usual majority.

Five days later they were equally well supported in the house of lords; but not without a rebuke from the Duke of Cumberland, one of the king's brothers, who said: "I have constantly opposed these oppressive measures; I heartily concur in reprobating the conduct of the ministers; my lords, I lament to see Brunswickers, who once to their great honor were employed in the defence of the liberties of the subject, now sent to subjugate his constitutional liberties in another part of this vast empire."

The whole number of men furnished in the war

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by Brunswick was equal to one twenty-seventh part of its collective population ; by the landgrave of Hesse, to one out of every twenty of his subjects, or one in four of the able-bodied men ; a proportionate conscription in 1776 would have shipped to America from England and Wales alone an army of more than four hundred thousand. Soldiers were impressed from the plough, the workshop, the highway ; no man was safe from the inferior agents of the princes, who kidnapped without scruple. Almost every family in Hesse mourned for one of its members ; light-hearted joyousness was not to be found among its peasantry ; most of the farm work was thrown upon women, whose large hands and feet, lustreless eye, and im-browened and yellowing skin showed that the beauty of the race suffered for a generation from the avarice of their prince.

In a letter to Voltaire, the landgrave, announcing his contribution of troops, expressed his zeal to learn "the difficult principles of the art of governing men, and of making them perceive that all which their ruler does is for their special good." He wrote also a catechism for princes, in which Voltaire professed to find traces of a pupil of the king of Prussia. "Do not attribute his education to me," answered the great Frederic ; "were he a graduate of my school, he would never have turned Catholic, and would never have sold his subjects to the English as they drive cattle to the shambles. He a preceptor of sovereigns ! The sordid passion for gain is the only motive of his vile procedure."

From avarice he sold the flesh of his own people while they were yet alive, depriving many of exist-

ence and himself of honor. In an empire which spoke the language of Luther, where Kant by profound analysis was compelling skepticism itself to bear witness to the eternal law of duty, where Lessing inculcated faith in an ever improving education of the race, the land of free cities and free thought, where the heart of the best palpitated with hope for the American cause, the landgrave forced the energies of his state to act against that liberty which was the child of the German forests, and the moral life of the Germanic nation. And did judgment slumber? Were the eyes of the Most High turned elsewhere? Or, in the abyss of the divine counsels, was some great benefit in preparation for lands all so full of tyrants, though beyond the discernment of the sordid princes, whose crimes were to promote the brotherhood of nations?

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CHAPTER LVIII.

BRITAIN BEATS UP FOR RECRUITS IN AMERICA.

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, 1776.

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THE disbanded Highlanders, who had settled in the valley of the Mohawk, were reported as disposed to rally once more under the king's standard; to prevent their rising, Schuyler, at Albany, in January, 1776, following the orders of the general congress, called out seven hundred of the New York militia, and sending an envoy in advance to quiet the Mohawks of the Lower Castle, marched upon Johnstown, in what was then Tryon county. He was joined on the way by Herkimer and the militia of that district, till his force numbered more than two thousand, and easily overpowered Sir John Johnson and his party. The Indians, as mediators, entreated the personal liberty of Johnson, and Schuyler, whose ingenuous mind would not harbor the thought, that a man of rank could break his word of honor, was contented with exacting his parole to preserve neutrality, and confine himself within carefully prescribed bounds.

The quantity of military stores that he delivered up was inconsiderable; on the twentieth, at noon, between two and three hundred Highlanders marched to the front of the invading force, and grounded their arms. In the two following days, Herkimer completed the disarmament of the disaffected, and secured six Highlanders as hostages for the peaceable conduct of the rest. Schuyler and his party were rewarded by the approbation of congress.

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After the death of Montgomery, the active command in Canada was reserved for Schuyler, to whom it properly belonged. His want of vigorous health, and the irksomeness of controlling the men of Connecticut, had inclined him to leave the army; the reverses suffered within his own district, now placed him in a painful dilemma: he must either risk the reproach of resigning at the news of disasters, or retain his commission, and in the division of his department leave to another the post of difficulty and danger. Unwilling at such a moment to retire, yet too "weak and indisposed" to undertake the campaign in Canada, he continued as before to render auxiliary services. The general congress acquiesced in his decision, and invited Washington to propose in his stead an officer to conduct the perilous warfare on the St. Lawrence.

The position of New York gave great advantage to the friends of the royal government; for the British men-of-war were masters of the bay, the harbor, the East River, and Hudson River below the Highlands; neither Staten Island nor Long Island could prevent the landing of British troops; the possession of Long Island would give the command of Manhattan Island, which had not as yet accumulated ma-

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terials for defence. In Queen's county, where a large part of the population was of Dutch descent, and among the English there were churchmen and very many Quakers, the inhabitants, by a vote of more than three to one, refused to send delegates to the provincial congress; and it was only after long delays that the inhabitants of Richmond county made their election. In West Chester, Morris of Morrisania and Van Cortlandt were unwavering in their patriotism; but the Delanceys and Philipse, who owned vast tracts of land in the county, bent their influence over their tenants in favor of the king with so much effect, that the inhabitants were nearly equally divided. In the city the popular movement was irresistible; but a large part of the wealthy merchants were opposed in any event to a separation from Britain. The colony of New York, guided in its policy by men of high ability, courage, and purity, had pursued with unvarying consistency a system of moderation, at first from a sincere desire to avoid a revolution, if it could be done without a surrender of American rights; and when that hope failed, with the purpose of making it manifest to all, that the plan of independence was adopted from necessity. In this manner only could they stand acquitted of the guilt of needlessly provoking war, and unite in the impending struggle the large majority of the people. It was also obviously wise to delay the outbreak of actual hostilities till warlike stores could be imported, and the women and children of a rich and populous city be removed from danger. This system was maintained alike by the prudent and the bold; by Livingston and Jay, by John Morin Scott and Macdougall.

A sort of truce was permitted; the British men-of-war were not fired upon; and in return the commerce of the port was not harassed, so that vessels laden with provisions, to purchase powder in St. Eustatia, went and came without question. A small party in the city, insignificant in numbers and in weight of character, clamored at this forbearance, and with rash indiscretion would have risked ultimate success for the gratification of momentary passion. Of these the most active was Isaac Sears, who, as a son of liberty, had merited high praise for his fearlessness. Vexed at his want of influence, impatient at being overlooked, and naturally inclined to precipitate counsels, he left the city for Connecticut, and returned with a party of mounted volunteers from that colony, who rode into the city and rifled the printing house of the tory Rivington. The committee of New York and its convention censured the riot, as an unwise infringement of the liberty of the press, and a dangerous example to their enemies; but as the unsolicited intermeddling of New England men in New York affairs, without concert with the New York committee and even without warning, it was resented by the Dutch, and universally by all moderate men. Jay and his colleagues were anxious, lest this high insult to the authority of the New York committee should confirm that jealous distrust of the eastern colonies, which the wise and the virtuous studied to suppress.

Disowned and censured by every branch of the popular representation of New York, vexed at not receiving a high appointment in the American navy, Sears repaired to the camp in Cambridge, and there found a hearer in Lee, to whom he represented that

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the city and colony of New York were in imminent danger from the tories; and that large bodies of unpaid volunteers from Connecticut would readily march to disarm them.

Meantime the New York provincial convention in spite of many obstacles and delays, met in sufficient numbers to transact business; explained to the general congress the expediency of delaying the appeal to arms in their city till better preparations could be made; and requested that body to undertake the disarming of the disaffected on Long Island. All their suggestions were approved, and made general in their application. After the report of a committee, consisting of Samuel Adams, William Livingston, and Jay, the several colonial conventions or committees were authorized to disarm "the unworthy Americans who took the part of their oppressors;" and were carefully invested with full authority to direct and control the continental troops who might be employed in this delicate service. Colonel Nathaniel Heard of Woodbridge, New Jersey, and Colonel Waterbury of Stamford in Connecticut, were then directed, each with five or six hundred minute-men, to enter Long Island, and disarm every man in Queen's county who voted against sending deputies to the New York congress. On second thought, the march of the minute men from Connecticut was countermanded, and the service assigned to the Jersey men alone, who, before the end of the month, aided by Lord Stirling's battalion, and in perfect harmony with the New York committee of safety, executed their commission.

Early in January the commander in chief ascer-

tained that Clinton was about to embark from Boston, with troops, on a southern expedition, of which New York was believed to be the object; at the same time, Lee, whose claim to "the character of a military genius and the officer of experience" had not as yet been even suspected to be "false," desired to be detached from the army, that he might collect volunteers in Connecticut to secure New York and expel the tories, or "crush those serpents before their rattles were grown;" and he urged the measure upon Washington, whether it exceeded his authority or not. After consulting John Adams, who was then with the provincial convention at Watertown, and who pronounced the plan to be practicable, expedient, and clearly authorized, Washington, uninformed of the measures already adopted, gave his consent to the request of Lee, expressly charging him to "keep always in view the declared intention of congress," and to communicate with the New York committee of safety; to whom he also wrote, soliciting their co-operation.

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The proposed measure would have been warmly seconded, had its execution been intrusted to an officer who respected the civil authority; but Lee drove on under the sole guidance of his own judgment and self-will. As soon as he arrived in Connecticut, he found that Waterbury, obeying the countermand of the general congress, had disbanded his regiment; railing at congress for indecision, and cursing the provincial congress of New York, he forwarded no communication to the committee of safety of that colony, while he persuaded the governor and council of Connecticut not only to reassemble the regiment

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of Waterbury, but to call out another under Ward. In this manner, Lee, who had never commanded so much as one regiment before he entered the American army, found himself in the separate command of two. Following his constant maxim, he usurped authority which he perfectly well knew did not belong to him, and appointed Sears assistant adjutant general with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

The tidings that Lee, with nearly fifteen hundred men of Connecticut, was advancing upon New York, without so much as intimating his design to its committee, or its inhabitants, offended the pride of the province, and increased a jealousy which afterwards proved unfavorable to federation. According to the American principle of the right of resistance, the wish to resort to force in New York must spring from within itself, and not be superimposed from abroad; Washington scrupulously respected the civil authority of each colony, as well as of the congress; Lee scoffed at the thought of being rigidly bound by either; and his movement seemed to have for its end to coerce New York, rather than to offer it his co-operation. The committee of safety, conscious of their readiness to devote their city as a sacrifice to the cause of America, despatched a messenger to Lee to request that the troops of Connecticut might not pass the border, till the purpose of their coming should be explained. Lee made a jest of the letter, as "wofully hysterical." He treated it as a sign of fear; and in his reply, he declared that "if the ships of war should make a pretext of his presence to fire on the town, the first house set in flames by their guns should be the funeral pile of some of their best friends;" and

added, in his rant, that he would "chain one hundred of them together by the neck."

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Both parties appealed to the general congress; and on motion of Edward Rutledge and Duane, Harrison, Lynch, and Allen were sent from that body with powers of direction. On the first day of February the three envoys met the committee of New York, when John Morin Scott said for himself and his colleagues: "Our duty to our constituents and their dignity forbid the introduction of troops without our consent; but we will always obey the orders of congress;" and they were satisfied with the assurance, that the troops would be under the control of the committee of the continental congress.

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On the fourth, Lee entered the city of New York, just two hours after Clinton anchored in its harbor. Troops from the Jerseys and from Connecticut at the same time marched into town, and a transport, with two companies of British infantry and some Highlanders, came up to the docks. In the general consternation, women and children were removed from the city, which for seven years to come was to know no peace; all the wagons that could be found were employed in transporting valuable effects; the flight in winter was attended with peculiar danger and distress; the opulent knew not where to find shelter; the poor, thrown upon the cold hands of exhausted charity in the interior towns and the Jerseys, suffered from a series of complicated wants. Both parties wished to delay extreme measures; Clinton pledged his honor that for the present no more British troops were coming, and said openly that he himself was on his way to North Carolina. But the work of

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defence was not given up by the Americans ; under the harmonizing influence of the continental committee, Lee and the New York committee held friendly conferences ; the whole people showed a wonderful alacrity ; and men and boys of all ages toiled with the greatest zeal and pleasure. To control the commerce of the Sound, a fortification was raised at Hellgate ; on a height west of Trinity church, a battery was erected fronting the North River ; that part of the old fort which faced Broadway was torn down ; Lee and Lord Stirling, crossing to Long Island, marked out the ground for an intrenched camp, extending from the Wallabout to Gowanus Bay, and spacious enough to hold four thousand men ; the connection between Long Island and New York was secured by a battery of forty guns at the foot of Wall street, and another of twenty guns a little further to the south. It was fondly hoped that the proposed fortifications would prove impregnable ; the ships of war, without firing a gun, removed to the bay ; and this state of peace and of confidence confirmed the preconceived notion of Lee's superior ability. The charm of exercising a separate command wrought a change in his caprices ; and he who two months before had scorned the Americans as unworthy to aspire after independence, was now loud in praise of the doctrines of "Common Sense," and repudiated the thought of reconciliation with Britain, unless "the whole ministry should be condignly punished, and the king beheaded or dethroned."

His zeal and his seeming success concentrated upon him public confidence. "Canada," said Washington, "will be a fine field for the exertion of your ad-

mirable talents, but your presence will be as necessary in New York." In like manner Franklin wrote: "I am glad you are come to New York; but I also wish you could be in Canada;" and on the nineteenth the congress destined him to "that most arduous service." John Adams, who had counselled his expedition to New York, wrote to him complacently, "that a luckier or a happier one had never been projected;" and added: "We want you at New York; we want you at Cambridge; we want you in Virginia; but Canada seems of more importance, and therefore you are sent there. I wish you the laurels of Wolfe and Montgomery, with a happier fate." Elated by such homage, Lee indulged his natural propensities, and made bold to ask money of the New York congress; "two thousand dollars at the least," said he; "if you could make it twenty five hundred it would be more convenient to me;" and they allowed him the gratuity. "When I leave this place," so he wrote to Washington on the last day of February, the "provincial congress and inhabitants will relapse into their hysterics; the men-of-war will return to their wharfs, and the first regiments from England will take quiet possession of the town." Those about him chimed in with his revilings. "Things will never go well," said Waterbury, "unless the city of New York is crushed down by the Connecticut people;" and Sears set no bounds to his contumelious abuse of the committee of New York and its convention.

On the first of March, after a warm contest among the delegates of various colonies, each wishing to have

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him where they had most at stake, on the motion of Edward Rutledge, Lee was invested with the command of the continental forces south of the Potomac. "As a Virginian, I rejoice at the change," wrote Washington; who had, however, already discovered that the officer so much courted was both "violent and fickle." On the seventh he left New York, but not without one last indulgence of his turbulent temper. The continental congress had instructed him to put the city in the best possible state of defence; and this he interpreted as a grant of unlimited authority. He therefore arrested men at discretion, and deputed power to Sears to offer a prescribed test oath to a registered number of suspected persons, and, if they refused it, to send them to Connecticut as irreclaimable enemies. To the rebuke of the New York convention, he answered: "When the enemy is at our door, forms must be dispensed with;" and on the eve of his departure, he gave Ward of Connecticut the sweeping order, "to secure the whole body of professed tories on Long Island." These arbitrary orders were resented by all the New York delegates as "a high encroachment upon the rights of the representatives of a free people," and were unequivocally condemned and reversed by congress.

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The expedition to the Carolinas never met the approval of Howe, who condemned the activity of the southern governors, and would have had them avoid all disputes, till New York should be recovered. When Lord Dunmore learned from Clinton that Cape Fear River was the place appointed for the meeting

of the seven regiments from Ireland, he broke out into angry complaints, that no heed had been paid to his representations, his sufferings, and his efforts; that Virginia, "the first on the continent for riches, power, and extent," was neglected, and the preference given to "a poor, insignificant colony," where there were no pilots, nor a harbor that could admit half the fleet, and where the army, should it land, must wade for many miles through a sandy pine barren, before it could reach the inhabited part of the country.

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But Martin, who had good reason to expect the arrival of the armament in January or early in February, was infatuated with the hope, that multitudes, even in the county of Brunswick, would revolt "from their new-fangled government;" and "his unwearied, persevering agent," Alexander Maclean, after a careful computation of the numbers that would flock to the king's standard from the interior, brought written assurances from the principal persons to whom he had been directed, that between two and three thousand men, of whom about half were well armed, would take the field at the governor's summons. Under this encouragement he was sent again into the back country, with a commission dated the tenth of January, authorizing Allan Macdonald of Kingsborough, and eight other Scots of Cumberland and Anson, and seventeen persons who resided in a belt of counties in middle Carolina and in Rowan, to raise and array all the king's loyal subjects, and to march with them in a body to Brunswick by the fifteenth of February. Donald Macdonald, then in his sixty

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Feb. loyalists were in high spirits; that their force would

amount even to six thousand men; that they were well furnished with wagons and horses; and that by the twentieth or twenty fifth of February at furthest they would be in possession of Wilmington, and within reach of the king's ships. On receiving their commission, William Campbell, Neil MacArthur, and Donald Macleod issued circular letters, inviting all their associates to meet on the fifth of February at Cross Creek, or, as it is now called, Fayetteville. At the appointed time all the Scots appeared, and four only of the rest. The Scots, who could promise no more than seven hundred men, advised to await the arrival of the British troops; the other royalists, who boasted that they could bring out five thousand, of whom five hundred were already embodied, prevailed in their demand for an immediate rising. But the Highlanders, whose past conflicts were ennobled by their courage and fidelity to one another, whose sorrows, borne for generations with fortitude, deserved at last to find relief, were sure to keep their word; from a blind instinct of kindred, they took up arms for a cause in which their traditions and their affections had no part; while many of the chiefs of the loyalists shrunk from danger to hiding places in swamps and forests. Employing a few days to collect his army, which was composed chiefly of Highlanders and remnants of the old Regulators, Macdonald, on the eighteenth, began his march for Wilmington, and at evening his army, of which the number was very

variously estimated, encamped on the Cape Fear river, four miles below Cross Creek.

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On that same day Moore, who, at the first menace of danger, took the field at the head of his regiment, and lay in an intrenched camp at Rockfish, was joined by Lillington, with one hundred and fifty minute men from Wilmington, by Kenon with two hundred of the Duplin militia, and by Ashe with about a hundred volunteer independent rangers; so that his number was increased to eleven hundred.

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On the nineteenth the royalists were paraded, with a view to assail Moore on the following night; but his camp was too strong to be attempted; and at the bare suspicion of such a project, two companies of Cotton's corps ran off with their arms. On that day Donald Macdonald, their commander, sent Donald Morrison with a proclamation, prepared the month before by Martin, calling on Moore and his troops to join the king's standard, or to be considered as enemies. Moore made answer instantly, that "neither his duty nor his inclination permitted him to accept terms so incompatible with American freedom;" and in return, he besought Macdonald not to array the deluded people under his command, against men who were resolved to hazard every thing in defence of the liberties of mankind. "You declare sentiments of revolt, hostility, and rebellion to the king and to the constitution," was Macdonald's prompt answer; "as a soldier in his majesty's service, it is my duty to conquer, if I cannot reclaim, all those who may be hardy enough to take up arms against the best of masters."

But knowing that Caswell, at the head of the gallant minute men of Newbern, and others to the num-

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ber of six or eight hundred, was marching through Duplin county, to effect a junction with Moore, MacDonald became aware of the extremity of his danger; cut off from the direct road along the Cape Fear, he resolved to leave the army at Rockfish in his rear, and by celerity of movement, and crossing rivers at unexpected places, to disengage himself from that larger force, and encounter the party with Caswell alone. Before marching, he urged his men to fidelity, expressed bitter scorn of "the base cravens who had deserted the night before," and continued: "If any amongst you is so faint-hearted as not to serve with the resolution of conquering or dying, this is the time for such to declare themselves." The speech was answered by a general huzza for the king; but from Cotton's corps about twenty men laid down their arms. The army then marched to Fayetteville, employed the night in crossing the Cape Fear, sunk their boats, and sent a party fifteen miles in advance to secure the bridge over South River. This the main body passed on the twenty first, and took the direct route to Wilmington. On the day on which they effected the passage, Moore detached Lillington and Ashe to reënforce Caswell, or, if that could not be effected, to occupy Moore's Creek bridge.

On the following days the Scots and Regulators drew near to Caswell, who perceived their purpose, and changed his own course, the more effectually to intercept their march. On the twenty third they thought to overtake him, and were arrayed in the order of battle, eighty able-bodied Highlanders, armed with broadswords, forming the centre of the army; but Caswell was already posted at Corbett's Ferry,

and could not be reached for want of boats. The royalists were in extreme danger; but at a point six miles higher up the Black River a negro succeeded in raising for their use a broad shallow boat; and while Maclean and Fraser, with a few men, a drum, and a pipe, were left to amuse Caswell, the main body of the loyalists crossed Black River near what is now Newkirk Bridge.

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On the twenty fifth, Lillington, who had not as yet been able to join Caswell, took post with his small party on the east side of the bridge over Moore's Creek. On the afternoon of the twenty sixth, Caswell reached its west side, and raising a small breastwork and destroying a part of the bridge, awaited the enemy, who on that day advanced within six miles of him. A messenger from the loyalists, sent to his camp under the pretext of summoning him to return to his allegiance, brought back word that he had halted upon the same side of the river with themselves, and could be attacked with advantage; but the wise Carolina commander, who was one of the best woodmen in the province, as well as a man of superior ability, had no sooner misled his enemy, than lighting up fires and leaving them burning, he crossed the creek, took off the planks from the bridge, and placed his men behind trees and such slight intrenchments as the night permitted to be thrown up.

The loyalists, expecting an easy victory, unanimously agreed that his camp should be immediately assaulted. His force at that time amounted to a thousand men, consisting of the Newbern minute men, of militia from Craven, Johnson, Dobbs, and Wake counties, and the detachment under Lillington. The

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army under Macdonald, who was himself confined to his tent by illness, numbered between fifteen and sixteen hundred. At one o'clock in the morning of the twenty seventh, the loyalists, commanded by Donald Macleod, began their march; but it cost so much time to cross an intervening morass, that it was within an hour of daylight before they reached the western bank of the creek. There they had expected to find Caswell encamped; they entered the ground in three columns without resistance, for Caswell and all his force had taken post on the opposite side. The Scots were now within less than twenty miles of Wilmington; orders were directly given to reduce the columns, and for the sake of concealment to form the line of battle within the verge of the wood; the rallying cry was, "King George and broadswords;" the signal for the attack, three cheers, the drum to beat and the pipes to play. It was still dark; Macleod, who led the van of about forty, was challenged at the bridge by the Carolina sentinels, asking: "Who goes there?" He answered: "A friend."—"A friend to whom?"—"To the king." Upon this the sentinels bent themselves down with their faces towards the ground. Macleod then challenged them in Gaelic, thinking they might be some of his own party who had crossed the bridge; receiving no answer, he fired his own piece, and ordered those with him to fire. Of the bridge that separated the Scots and the Carolinians, nothing had been left but the two logs, which had served as sleepers; only two persons therefore could pass at a time. Donald Macleod and John Campbell rushed forward, and succeeded in getting over; Highlanders who followed with broadswords, were shot

down on the logs, falling into the deep and muddy water of the creek. Macleod, who was greatly esteemed for his valor and his worth, was mortally wounded; and yet he was seen to rise repeatedly from the ground, flourishing his sword and encouraging his men to come on, till he received twenty six, or as some say thirty six, balls in his body. Campbell also was shot dead. It was impossible to furnish men for the deadly pass, and in a very few minutes the assailants fled in irretrievable despair. The Americans had but three wounded, one only mortally; of their opponents, about thirty, less than fifty at most, were killed or mortally wounded, most of them while passing the bridge. The routed fugitives could never be rallied; during the following day the aged Macdonald their general, and many others of the chief men, were taken prisoners; amongst the rest, Macdonald of Kingsborough and one of his sons, who were at first confined in Halifax jail, and afterwards transferred to Reading in Pennsylvania. Thirteen wagons, with complete sets of horses, eighteen hundred stand of arms, one hundred and fifty swords, two medicine chests just received from England, a box containing fifteen thousand pounds sterling in gold, fell to the victors; eight or nine hundred common soldiers were taken, disarmed, and dismissed.

A generous zeal pervaded all ranks of people in every part of North Carolina; in less than a fortnight more than nine thousand four hundred men had risen against the enemy; and the coming of Clinton inspired no terror. They knew well the difficulty of moving from the sea into their back country, and almost every man was ready to turn out at an hour's

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warning. Moore, under orders from the council, disarmed the Highlanders and Regulators of the back country, and sent the ringleaders to Halifax jail. Virginia offered assistance, and South Carolina would gladly have contributed relief; but North Carolina had men enough of her own to crush the insurrection and guard against invasion; and as they marched in triumph through their piny forests, they were persuaded that in their own woods they could win an easy victory over British regulars. Martin had promised the king to raise ten thousand recruits; the storeship, with their ten thousand stands of arms and two millions of cartridges, was then buffeting the storms of the Atlantic; and he could not supply a single company. North Carolina remained confident, secure, and tranquil; the terrors of a fate like that of Norfolk could not dismay the patriots of Wilmington; the people spoke more and more of independence; and the provincial congress, at its impending session, was expected to give an authoritative form to the prevailing desire.

## CHAPTER LIX.

BOSTON DELIVERED.

FEBRUARY, MARCH, 1776.

IN February, 1776, the commander in chief of the American army found himself supplied with only money enough to answer claims antecedent to the last day of December; his want of powder was still so great as to require the most careful concealment. Congress had strangely lavished its resources on the equipment of a navy; leaving him in such dearth of the materials of war, that he was compelled to look for them in every direction, and at one time had even asked if something could be spared him from the hoped-for acquisitions of Montgomery. Having no permanent army, and unable to enlist for the year a sufficient number of soldiers to defend his lines, he was obliged to rely for two months on the service of three regiments of militia from Connecticut, one from New Hampshire, and six from Massachusetts; but at the same time, with all the explicitness and force that his experience, his dangers, and his trials could suggest, he set be-

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fore congress the ruinous imperfections of their military system. To the vast numbers of mercenary troops that were to come over in spring to reënforce his enemy, he could indulge no hope of opposing any thing better than fleeting bands of undisciplined men, ill-clad, and poorly armed. In this dark period his own spirit never drooped, and all observers attested his amazing diligence. With swift and unceasing application he devoted himself exclusively to preparing for the stroke which he hoped would prove decisive, for he persevered in his purpose to break up the "nest" of the British, and drive them out of Boston, though he had in reserve but one hundred barrels of powder.

The army in Boston consisted of nearly eight thousand rank and file, beside officers and the complements of the ships of war. The young men who held commissions, were full of ingenious devices to amuse the common soldiers, and to relieve the wearisomeness of their own hours. The Old South meeting house was turned into a riding school for the light dragoons; Faneuil Hall became a playhouse, where the officers appeared as actors on the stage; they even attempted balls and planned a masquerade. The winter was mild; so that navigation was not interrupted, and provisions were imported in abundance from Ireland and England, from Barbados and Antigua. Thus they whiled away the time in their comfortable quarters, without a thought of danger, awaiting early summer, and large reënforcements, preparatory to their removal to New York.

The possession of Dorchester Heights would give



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Washington the command of Boston and of a large part of the harbor. Ill supplied as he was with powder, and having no resource for artillery but in the captures made from the enemy by privateers, and the cannon which had been dragged overland from Lake George, he still made the necessary arrangements to occupy the position, in the hope to bring the enemy out, and force them to offer battle. To that end the council of Massachusetts, at his request, called in the militia of the nearest towns. The engineer employed to devise and superintend the works was Rufus Putnam; and the time chosen for their erection was the eve of the anniversary of "the Boston massacre." To harass the enemy and divert attention, a heavy cannonade and bombardment of the town was kept up during the two previous nights. Soon after candlelight on the fourth of March, the firing was renewed with greater vehemence than before, from Cobble Hill, now Somerville, from Lechmere's Point, now East Cambridge, and from a battery in Roxbury, and was returned with such zeal by the British, that a continued roar of cannon and mortars was heard from seven o'clock till daylight. As soon as it had begun, Washington proceeded to take possession of the Heights of Dorchester. All the requisite dispositions, including the method of baffling an attack, had been deliberately considered, and prepared with consummate skill; every thing was ready; every man knew his place, his specific task, and the duty of executing it with celerity and silence. A party of eight hundred went in advance as a guard; one half of them taking post on the height nearest Boston, the other at the easternmost point, opposite the castle. They were followed

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by carts with intrenching tools, and by the working party of twelve hundred, under the command of Thomas, an officer whose great merit on this occasion is the more to be remembered from the shortness of his career. The ground, for eighteen inches deep, was frozen too hard to yield earth for the defences; but the foresight of the chief had amply provided substitutes; a train of more than three hundred carts, easily drawn by oxen over the frozen marshes, brought bundles of screwed hay, to form a cover for Dorchester Neck where it was exposed to a raking fire, and an amazing quantity of gabions and fascines and chandeliers for the redoubts. The drivers, as they goaded on their cattle, suppressed their voices; the westerly wind carried all sound away from the town. Washington perceived with delight that his movement was unobserved, and that the ceaseless noise of artillery alone attracted attention. The hours, as they flew by, were the most eventful of his life; after nine months of intolerable waiting, a crisis was at hand, but every thing was prepared to insure his success; and as he raised the intrenchments of American independence on the heights of Dorchester, he had a happiness of mind till then unknown to him during the siege. The night, though cold, was not severely so; the temperature was the fittest that could be for out-door work; the haze that denotes a softening of the air hung round the base of the ridge; above him, the moon, which that morning had become full, was shining in cloudless lustre; at his side, hundreds of men toiled in stillness at the frozen ground with an assiduity that knew nothing of fatigue; the three hundred teams

were all at the same time in motion, going backwards and forwards, some three, some four times; beneath him, in the town, lay the British general, indifferent to the incessant noise of cannon, never dreaming of an ejectionment from his comfortable winter quarters; the army that checkered the quiet place with martial show, reposed without special watchfulness or fear; the crowd of ships in the fleet rode proudly in the spacious harbor, motionless except as they turned on their moorings with the tide, unsuspecting of peril; the wretched, unarmed inhabitants of Boston, emaciated from want of wholesome food, pining after freedom, as yet little cheered by hope, trembled lest their own houses should be struck in the tumult, which raged as if heaven and earth were at variance; the common people that were left in the villages all around, chiefly women and children, driven from their beds by the rattling of their windows and the jar of their houses, could watch from the hill-tops the flight of every shell that was thrown, and waited for morning with wonder and anxiety. In England, the ministry trusted implicitly the assurances of Howe, that he "was not under the least apprehensions of any attack from the rebels;" the king expected that after wintering in Boston, and awaiting reënforcements, he would, in May or in the first week of June, sail for New York; the courtiers were wishing Boston and all New England sunk to the very bottom of the sea.

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At about three in the morning the working party was relieved; but the toil was continued with unremitting energy, so that in one night strong redoubts, amply secure against grapeshot and musketry, crowned



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each of the two hills ; an abattis constructed of trees, felled in the neighboring orchards, protected the foot of the ridge ; the top was surmounted by barrels, filled with earth and stones, which, as the hill sides were steep and bare of trees and bushes, were, in case of an attack, to be rolled down against the assailing columns. " Perhaps there never was so much work done in so short a space of time." Some time after daybreak on the morning of the fifth, the British from Boston beheld with astonishment and dismay the forts which had sprung up in a night. At the discovery the batteries on both sides ceased to play, and a fearful quiet prevailed. Howe, as he saw the new intrenchments loom in imposing strength, reported that " they must have been the employment of at least twelve thousand men ;" and some of his officers acknowledged, that the sudden appearance recalled the wonderful stories in eastern romances of enchantment, and the invisible agency of fairy hands. The British general found himself surpassed in military skill by officers whom he had pretended to despise. One unexpected combination, concerted with faultless ability, and suddenly executed, had in a few hours made his position untenable. His army at that time was well supplied with provisions from vessels which were constantly coming into port ; the Americans, on the contrary, were poorly cared for and poorly paid : the British had abundance of artillery ; the Americans had almost no large guns that were serviceable : the British had a profusion of ammunition ; the Americans scarce enough to supply their few cannon for six or eight days ; and yet the British had no choice but to dislodge the New England farmers or retreat. Left



very much to himself, Howe knew not what to propose; neither Burgoyne nor Clinton was with him to share his responsibility. "If they retain possession of the heights," said Admiral Shulldham, "I cannot keep a ship in the harbor." A council of war was called, and it was determined to assault the Americans. Washington had provided for the contingency; and had the British made a vigorous sally against the party at Dorchester, the Americans had floating batteries and boats ready to carry four thousand men into Boston. All day long the neighboring hills which commanded a view of the scene were crowded with spectators, who watched the bustle, hurry, and alarm in the town. Twenty four hundred men were detailed and put under the command of Lord Percy to make the attack; but the men were pale and dejected; they shared the general consternation, and remembered Bunker Hill; and Percy showed no heart for an enterprise, which Howe himself confessed to be hazardous. When they were seen to enter the boats, the Americans on the heights, who expected an immediate conflict, kindled with joy in their confidence of repelling them victoriously. Washington said: "Remember, it is the fifth of March, a day never to be forgotten; avenge the death of your brethren;" and the words, as they flew from mouth to mouth, inflamed still more the courage of his soldiers. But they were doomed to disappointment; the British sallying party, and Percy, who did not intend to attempt scaling the heights till after nightfall, were borne in the transports to the castle; in the afternoon a violent storm of wind came up from the south, and about midnight blew with such

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1776. Mar. fury that two or three vessels were driven on shore: rain fell in torrents on the morning of the sixth, so that the movement against the American lines was still further delayed, till it became undeniably evident, that the attempt must end in the utter ruin of the British army. "If we had powder," said Washington, "I would give them a dose they would not well like." Their hostile appearances subsided; Howe called a second council of war, and its members were obliged to advise the instant evacuation of Boston.

When the orders for that evacuation were issued, the loyal inhabitants, and the royalists who had fled to the town for refuge, were struck with sudden horror and despair, as though smitten by a thunderbolt out of a clear sky. Their error had grown from their confidence in the overwhelming force of the British power, which was to have been able to ravage the country in undisputed triumph, and restore them to the safe enjoyment of their possessions. Some of them were wretched time-servers, whose loyalty was prompted by the passion for gain and advancement; others were among the wealthiest and most upright persons in the colony, who, from the principle of honor, had left their homes, their fortunes, and even their families, to rally round the standard of their sovereign. Now the condition of the army was so desperate, that there was no time even to propose a capitulation for their safety, and the best that their sovereign could offer them was a passage in crowded transports from the cherished land of their nativity to the inhospitable shores of Nova Scotia, where they must remain, cut off from all that is dearest and

pleasantest in life; condemned to hopeless inferiority in a dreary place of exile; foregoing for the future the pride and joy of healthful activity; exchanging the delight of a love of country for a paralyzing, degrading sentiment of useless loyalty; beggared in their sympathies as well as in their fortunes; doomed to depend on the scanty charities, grudgingly doled out, of a monarch for whom they had surrendered every thing, and to find how hard are the steps of the great men's houses, at which needy suppliants must ever renew their importunities.

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The greatest disgrace to the arms of the British was the manifest confession of their inability to protect their friends, who had risked every thing in their cause. Who could now put trust in their promises? On the eighth, Howe, through the selectmen of Boston, wished to come to an understanding with Washington that the town should be spared, provided he might be suffered to leave it without molestation. The unauthenticated proposal could meet with no reply from the American commander in chief, who continued to strengthen his lines, drew nearer and nearer to his enemy, and used his artillery sparingly only from want of ammunition. On the night following the ninth, a strong detachment began a fort on Nook Hill, which commanded Boston Neck; but some of the men having imprudently lighted a fire, the British, with their cannon and mortars, were able to interrupt the work; and yet as Washington did not abandon his design, Howe was compelled to hasten his embarkation. In November he had given as a reason for not then changing the scene of the war, that he had not transports enough



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to remove his troops; now he had a larger force and fewer transports. He pretended that he went from Boston for refreshment; but in point of quarters it could be no great refreshment, to go from one of the largest towns in America to one of the least, where the troops were in part kept on shipboard, stived up one upon another, in part encamped on ground deeply covered with snow; where the officers and refugees, many of whom were almost penniless, suffered every extortion, and paid sixfold price for the meanest shelter over their heads; and where he found less forage and provisions for the king's troops than he left behind him, at Boston, for Washington's army.

He gave out that his object was the strengthening of Halifax; but on the third of the preceding December, 1775, he had written home, that "that place was in perfect security." He offered the excuse that he wanted an opportunity for the exercise of his troops in line; and was it for that end that troops, whose destination was New York, were carried six hundred miles out of their way, as though there had been no place for parade but in Nova Scotia? A chosen British army, with chosen officers, equipped with every thing essential to war, sent to correct revolted subjects, to chastise a resisting town, to assert the authority of the British parliament, after being imprisoned for many tedious months in the place they were to have punished, found no refuge but on board the fleet.

In these very hours the confidence of the ministry was at its point of culmination; they had heard of the safety of Quebec; they had succeeded in engaging more than twenty thousand German mercenaries and



recruits, and they would not hearken to a doubt of speedily crushing the rebellion. On the morning of the fourteenth of March, the British secretary of state listened to a speech from Thayendanegea, otherwise named Joseph Brant, a full-blooded Mohawk, of the Wolf tribe, the chosen chief of the confederacy of the Six Nations, who had crossed the great lake to see King George; to boast that the savages, "his brethren," had offered the last year to prevent the invasion of Canada; and to complain that the white people had given them no support. "Brother," so the Mohawk chief addressed Germain, "we hope to see these bad children, the New England people, chastised. The Indians have always been ready to assist the king." And Germain replied: "Continue to manifest attachment to the king; and be sure of his majesty's favor." George and his ministers promised themselves important aid from the Iroquois and Northwestern warriors. "Unconditional submission" was now the watchword of Germain; and when on the evening of the same day the Duke of Grafton attempted once more, in the house of lords, to plead for conciliation, the gentle Dartmouth approved sending over "a sufficient force to awe the colonies into submission;" Hillsborough would "listen to no accommodation, short of the acknowledgment of the right of taxation, and the submission of Massachusetts to the law for altering its charter;" and Mansfield ridiculed the idea of suspending hostilities, and laughed moderating counsels away. The ministers pursued their rash policy with such violence and such a determination to brave all difficulties, that it was evident they followed a superior will, which demand-

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ed implicit obedience. In the laying waste which was proposed, New England was to be spared the least.

The second night after this last effort in the British parliament to restrain the impetuous arrogance of the ministry had been defeated with contemptuous scorn, Washington gained possession of Nook Hill, and with it the power of opening the highway from Roxbury to Boston. At the appearance of this work, the British retreated precipitately; the army, about eight thousand in number, and more than eleven hundred refugees, began their embarkation at four in the morning; in less than six hours they were all put on board one hundred and twenty transports; Howe himself, among the last to leave the town, took passage with the admiral in the Chatham; before ten they were under way; and the citizens of Boston, from every height and every wharf, could see the fleet sail out of the harbor in a long line, extending from the castle to Nantasket Roads.

But where were Thacher, and Mayhew, and Dana, and Molineux, and Quincy, and Gardner, and Warren? Would that they, and all the martyrs of Lexington and Bunker Hill, had lived to gaze on the receding sails!

Troops from Roxbury at once moved into Boston, and others from Cambridge crossed over in boats. Everywhere appeared marks of hurry in the flight of the British; among other stores, they left behind them two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, of which one half were serviceable; twenty five hundred chaldrons of sea coal; twenty five thousand bushels of wheat; three thousand bushels of barley and oats; one hundred and fifty horses; bedding and clothing for sol-

diers. Nor was this all; several British storeships, consigned to Boston, and ignorant of the retreat, successively entered the harbor without suspicion, and fell into the hands of the Americans; among them the ship *Hope*, which, in addition to carbines, bayonets, gun-carriages, and all sorts of tools necessary for artillery, had on board more than seven times as much powder as Washington's whole stock when his last movement was begun.

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On the next day, Washington ordered five of his best regiments to march under Heath to New York. On the twentieth, the main body of the army made its entry into Boston, alive with curiosity to behold the town which had been the first object of the war, the immediate cause of hostilities, the place of arms defended by Britain at the cost of more than a million pounds sterling, and which the continent had contended for so long. Except one meeting-house and a few wooden buildings which had been used for fuel, the houses had been left in a good condition. When, two days later, all restrictions on intercourse with the town were removed, and the exiles and their friends streamed in, all hearts were touched at "witnessing the tender interviews and fond embraces of those who had been long separated." For Washington, crowded welcomes and words of gratitude hung on the faltering tongues of the liberated inhabitants; the selectmen of Boston addressed him in their name: "Next to the divine power we ascribe to your wisdom, that this acquisition has been made with so little effusion of human blood;" and in reply he paid a just tribute to their unparalleled fortitude.

When the quiet of a week had revived ancient



CHAP. usages, Washington attended the Thursday lecture,  
LIX. which had been kept up from the days of Winthrop and  
1776. Wilson, and all rejoiced with exceeding joy at seeing  
Mar. this New England Zion once more a quiet habitation;  
they called it "a tabernacle that should never be  
taken down, of which not one of the stakes should ever  
be removed, nor one of the cords be broken;" and as  
the words were spoken, it seemed as if the old cen-  
tury was holding out its hand to the new, and the  
puritan ancestry of Massachusetts returning to bless  
the deliverer of their children.

On the twenty ninth, the two branches of the legislature addressed him jointly, dwelling on the respect he had ever shown to their civil constitution, as well as on his regard for the lives and health of all under his command. "Go on," said they, "still go on, approved by heaven, revered by all good men, and dreaded by tyrants; may future generations, in the peaceful enjoyment of that freedom, which your sword shall have established, raise the most lasting monuments to the name of Washington." And the chief, in his answer, renewed his pledges of "a regard to every provincial institution." When the continental congress, on the motion of John Adams, voted him thanks, and a commemorative medal of gold, he modestly transferred their praises to the men of his command, saying: "They were, indeed, at first a band of undisciplined husbandmen; but it is, under God, to their bravery and attention to duty, that I am indebted for that success which has procured me the only reward I wish to receive—the affection and esteem of my countrymen."

New England was always true to Washington; the



whole mass of her population, to the end of the war and during all his life, heaved and swelled with sympathy for his fortunes; he could not make a sign to her for aid, but her sons rose up to his support; nor utter advice to his country, but they gave it reverence and heed.

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And never was so great a result obtained at so small a cost of human life. The putting the British army to flight was the first decisive victory of the industrious middling class over the most powerful representative of the mediæval aristocracy; and the whole number of New England men killed in the siege after Washington took the command was less than twenty; the liberation of New England cost all together less than two hundred lives in battle; and the triumphant general, as he looked around, enjoyed the serenest delight, for he saw no mourners among those who greeted his entry after his bloodless victory.

Within the borders of four New England states, permanent peace with self-government was from this time substantially confirmed. And who now, even in the mother land of Massachusetts, does not rejoice at this achievement of a people which so thoroughly represented the middling class of the civilized world? How had they shown patience as well as fortitude! How long they waited, and when the right moment came, how promptly they rose! How they responded to the inward voice which bade them claim freedom as a birthright, and dread an acquiescence in its loss as a violation of the peace of the soul! Pious and contented, frugal, laborious, and affluent, their rule for the government of conduct was not the pride of chivalry, but the eternal law of

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duty. Lovers of speculative truth, in an age of materialists they cherished habitually a firm faith in the subjection of all created things to the rule of divine justice, and their distinguishing career was one of action; the vigor of their will was never paralyzed by doubt; they were cheered by confidence in the amelioration of the race, and embraced in their affections the world of mankind. This wonderful people set the example of public schools for all their children, with a degree of perfection which the ancient mother country yet vainly strives to rival; and in their town governments they revealed the secret of republics. None knew better than they how to combine the minute discharge of the every day offices of life with large, and ready, and generous sympathies; sometimes soaring high and far in the daring of their enterprise, and sometimes following with painful assiduity even the humblest calling that promised lawful and honest gain; but always the advocates of disinterested benevolence as the true creed of a nation. The men of this century have crowned Bunker Hill, from which divine, triumphant hope attended their fathers in their retreat, with a monument whose summit greets the ray of morning, and catches the eye of the mariner, homeward bound. Around that spot how all is changed! A wealthy town rises over the pastures which the British columns wet with their blood; the city of Boston covers compactly its old soil, and fills the bay, and encroaches on the sea with its magazines, and workshops, and dwellings; the genius of commerce, rapidly effacing every landmark of the siege, has already levelled the site of Wash-

ington's last fort; the overflowing population extends itself into the adjacent country; the rivers, as they fall and flow on, are made to toil for man; restless intelligence teaches, in countless factories, new beneficial applications of the laws of nature; railroads diverge into the heart of the continent; ships that are among the largest and fleetest that ever were constructed, leave the harbor to visit every quarter of the globe; the neighboring college has grown into a university, true to the cause of good learning, of science, and free inquiry; in the happy development of its powers, New England has calmed the passions that were roused by oppression, and, tranquilly enjoying independence, breathes once more affection for its mother country, peace to all nations, and good will to man.

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## CHAPTER LX.

### THE FIRST ACT OF INDEPENDENCE.

FEBRUARY—APRIL, 1776.

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ON the ninth day of February John Adams resumed his seat in congress, with Elbridge Gerry for a colleague, in place of the feeble Cushing, and with instructions from his constituents to establish liberty in America upon a permanent basis. His nature was robust and manly; now he was in the happiest mood of mind for asserting the independence of his country. He had confidence in the ability of New England to drive away their enemy; in Washington, as a brave and prudent commander; in his wife, who cheered him with the fortitude of womanly heroism; in the cause of his country, which seemed so bound up with the welfare of mankind, that Providence could not suffer its defeat; in himself, for his convictions were clear, his will fixed, and his mind prepared to let his little property and his life go, sooner than the rights of his country.

Looking into himself he saw weaknesses enough; but neither meanness, nor dishonesty, nor timidity.



His overweening self-esteem was his chief blemish; and if he compared himself with his great fellow workers, there was some point on which he was superior to any one of them; he had more learning than Washington, or any other American statesman of his age; better knowledge of freedom as grounded in law than Samuel Adams; clearer insight into the constructive elements of government than Franklin; more power in debate than Jefferson; more courageous manliness than Dickinson; more force in motion than Jay; so that, by varying and confining his comparisons, he could easily fancy himself the greatest of them all. He was capable of thinking himself the centre of any circle, to which he had been no more than a tangent; his vanity was in such excess, that in manhood it sometimes confused his judgment, and in age bewildered his memory; but the stain did not reach beyond the surface; it impaired the lustre, not the hardy integrity of his character. He was humane and frank, generous and clement; yet he wanted that spirit of love which reconciles to being outdone. He could not look with complacency on those who excelled him, and regarded another's bearing away the palm as a wrong to himself; he never sat placidly under the shade of a greater reputation than his own, and could try to jostle aside the presumptuous possessor of recognised superiority; but his envy, though it laid open how deeply his self-love was wounded, had hardly a tinge of malignity, and never led him to derelictions for the sake of revenge. He did his fame injustice when, later in life, he represented himself as suffering from persecutions on account of his early zeal for independence; he was no weakling to whine about injured feelings; he

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went to his task, bright, and cheery, and brave; he was the hammer and not the anvil; and it was for others to fear his prowess and to shrink under his blows. His courage was unflinching in debate, and everywhere else; he never knew what fear is; and had he gone into the army as he once longed to do, he would have taken there the virtues of temperance, decision, and intrepidity. To his latest old age his spirit was robust, buoyant, and joyous; he saw ten times as much pleasure as pain in the world; and after his arm quivered and his eye grew dim, he was ready to begin life anew and fight its battle over again.

In his youth he fell among skeptics, read Bolingbroke's works five times through, and accustomed himself to reason freely and think boldly; he esteemed himself a profound metaphysician, but only skimmed the speculations of others; though at first destined to be a minister, he became a rebel to Calvinism, and never had any very fixed religious creed; but for all that, he was a stanch man of New England, and his fond partiality to its people, its institutions, its social condition, and its laws, followed him into congress and its committees, and social life, tinctured his judgment, and clinched his prepossessions; but the elements in New England that he loved most, were those which were eminently friendly to universal culture and republican equality. A poor farmer's son, bent on making his way in the world, at twenty years old beginning to earn his own bread, pinched and starved as master of a stingy country school, he formed early habits of order and frugality, and steadily advanced to fortune; but though exact in his accounts, there was nothing niggardly in his thrift,

and his modest hospitality was prompt and hearty. He loved homage, and it made him blind; to those who flattered him he gave his confidence freely, and often unwisely; and while he watched the general movement of affairs with comprehensive sagacity, he was never a calm observer of individual men. He was of the choleric temperament: though his frame was compact and large, yet from physical organization he was singularly sensitive; could break out into uncontrollable rage, and with all his acquisitions, never learned to rule his own spirit; but his anger did not so much drive him to do wrong, as to do right ungraciously. No man was less fitted to gain his end by arts of indirection; he knew not how to intrigue, was indiscreetly talkative, and almost thought aloud; whenever he sought to win an uncertain person to his support, his ways of courtship were uncouth, so that he made few friends except by his weight of character, ability, public spirit, and integrity, was unapt as the leader of a party, and never appeared so well as when he acted from inspirations of his own.

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Hating intolerance in all its forms, an impassioned lover of civil liberty, as the glory of man and the best evidence and the best result of civilization, he, of all men in congress, was incomparable as a dogmatist; essentially right-minded; loving to teach with authority; pressing onward unsparingly with his argument; impatient of contradiction; unequalled as a positive champion of the right. He was the Martin Luther of the American revolution, borne on to utter his convictions fearlessly by an impulse which forbade his acting otherwise. He was now too much in

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earnest, and too much elevated by the greatness of his work, to think of himself; too anxiously desiring aid, to disparage those who gave it. In the fervor of his activity, his faults disappeared. His intellect and public spirit, all the noblest parts of his nature, were called into the fullest exercise, and strained to the uttermost of their healthful power. Combining more than any other, farseness of sight and fixedness of belief with courage and power of utterance, he was looked up to as the ablest debater in congress. Preserving some of the habits of the lawyer, he was redundant in words and cumulative in argument; but his warmth and sincerity kept him from the affectations of a pedant or a rhetorician. Forbearance was no longer in season; the irrepressible talent of persevering, peremptory assertion was wanted; the more he was hurried along by his own vehement will the better; now his country, humanity, the age, the hour, demanded that the right should be spoken out; his high excitement had not the air of passion, but appeared, as it was, the clear perception of the sublimity of his task. When, in the life of a statesman, were six months of more importance to the race, than these six months in the career of John Adams?

On resuming his seat, he found a change in the delegation of South Carolina. That province had sent to Philadelphia a vessel not larger than a pilot boat, for Gadsden, who held the highest rank in their army: at the risk of capture, the patriot embarked in January; fought his way through the ice in the Delaware, and against headwinds at sea; escaped the British cruisers only by running the small craft in



which he sailed upon the sands of North Carolina, and continuing his journey through Georgetown to Charleston by land, encouraged all who came round him on the way to demand independence. To aid in forming a new government, the elder Rutledge had preceded him, leaving the delegation from their colony to suffer from the absence of its strongest will and its clearest mind. Chase of Maryland kept always in zeal and decision far ahead of the moderate among his friends; but that province had, for the time, like Pennsylvania, yielded to proprietary influences; and its convention looked with distrust upon John Adams, as biassed in favor of revolution by the office of chief justice of Massachusetts, to which he had unexpectedly been chosen. Yet while the members of congress stammered in their utterance, they listened with disgust to Wilson, when, on the thirteenth of February, he presented a very long, ill written draught of an address to their constituents, in which they were made to disclaim the idea of renouncing their allegiance; and its author, perceiving that the majority relished neither its style nor its doctrine, thought fit to allow it to subside without a vote.

On the sixteenth, the great measure of enfranchising American commerce was seriously considered. "Open your ports," said a member; "your trade will then become of so much consequence that foreigners will protect you." "In war," argued Wilson, "trade should be carried on with greater vigor than ever, after the manner of the United Provinces in their struggle against Spain. The merchants themselves must judge of the risks. Our vessels and our seamen are all abroad; and unless we open our ports, will

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not return." Sherman wished first to secure a protective treaty with a foreign power. Harrison said more explicitly: "We have hobbled on under a fatal attachment to Great Britain; I felt that attachment as much as any man, but I feel a stronger one to my country." Wythe now took the lead. In him a vigorous intellect was obedient to duty; a learned and able lawyer, he also cultivated poetry and letters; not rich, he was above want; in his habits he was as abstemious as an ascetic; his manners had the frolic mirthfulness of innocence. Genial and loving, overflowing with charity and benevolence, he blended the gentleness of human kindness with sincerity in his conduct, and indomitable firmness in his convictions of right. From 1774 his views coincided with those of Jefferson, and his artless simplicity of character, his legal erudition and acuteness, added persuasion to his words, as he drew attention to the real point at issue: "It is too true our ships may be taken unless we provide a remedy; but we may authorize vessels to arm, and we may give letters of marque and reprisal. We may also invite foreign powers to make treaties of commerce with us; but before this measure is adopted, it is to be considered in what character we shall treat? As subjects of Great Britain? As rebels? No: we must declare ourselves a free people." With this explanation he moved a resolution, "That the colonies have a right to contract alliances with foreign powers." "This is independence," said an objector. The question whether the resolution should be considered, was decided in the affirmative by seven colonies

against five; but nothing more was determined. The debate on opening the ports was then continued; but seven weeks of hesitation preceded its decision.

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On the day of this discussion the assembly of Pennsylvania formed a quorum. It required of Joseph Reed, who had been chosen a member in the place of Mifflin, the oath of allegiance to King George; in a few days, the more wary Franklin, who thus far had not taken his seat in so loyal a body, sent in his resignation, under a plea of age, and was succeeded by Rittenhouse.

On the nineteenth, Smith, the provost of the college in Philadelphia, delivered before congress, the Pennsylvania assembly, and other invited bodies, a eulogy on Montgomery; when, two days later, William Livingston moved a vote of thanks to the speaker, with a request that he would print his oration, earnest objections were raised, "because he had declared the sentiments of the congress to be in favor of continuing in a state of dependence." Livingston was sustained by Duane, Wilson, and Willing; was opposed by Chase, John Adams, Wythe, Edward Rutledge, Wolcott, and Sherman; and at last the motion was withdrawn.

Yet there still prevailed a disinclination to grapple with the ever recurring question which required immediate solution. The system of short enlistments appeared to Washington so fraught with danger, that, unasked by congress and even against their resolves, he forced his advice upon them; and on the twenty second they took into consideration his importunate protest against the policy of raising a new army for each campaign. The system, of which the hazard was

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incalculable, had precipitated the fate of Montgomery, had exposed his own position to imminent peril. Successive bodies of raw recruits could not form a well disciplined army, or perform the service of veterans; their losses were always great while becoming inured to the camp; it was their nature to waste arms, ammunition, camp utensils, and barracks; discipline would be relaxed for the sake of inducing a second enlistment; the expense of calling in militia men, of whom at every relief two must be paid for the service of one, was enormous. The trouble and perplexity of disbanding one army and raising another at the same instant, and in the presence of an enemy, were, as he knew, "such as it is scarcely in the power of words to describe, and such as no man who had experienced them once would ever undergo again." He therefore proposed that a large bounty should be offered, and soldiers enlisted for the war.

The obvious wisdom of the advice and the solemnity with which it was enforced, arrested attention; and Samuel Adams proposed to take up the question of lengthening the time of enlistments, which had originally been limited from the hope of a speedy reconciliation. Some members would not yet admit the thought of a protracted war; some rested hope on Rockingham and Chatham; some wished first to ascertain the powers of the coming commissioners; some wanted to wait for an explicit declaration from France; from the revolution of 1688 opposition to a standing army had been the watchword of liberty; the New England colonies had from their beginning been defended by their own militia; in the last French war, troops had been called out only for the season. "En-

listment for a long period," said Sherman, "is a state of slavery; a rotation of service in arms is favorable to liberty." "I am in favor of the proposition to raise men for the war," said John Adams; "but not to depend upon it, as men must be averse to it, and the war may last ten years." Congress was not in a mood to adopt decisive measures; and the touching entreaties of the general were passed by unheeded. England was sending over veteran armies; and they were to be met by soldiers engaged only for a year.

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The debate branched off into a discussion on the pay of officers, respecting which the frugal statesmen of the north differed from those of the south; John Adams thought the democratic tendency in New England less dangerous than the aristocratic tendency elsewhere; and Harrison seemed to insinuate that the war was a New England war. But it was becoming plain that danger hung over every part of the country; on the twenty seventh, the five middle colonies from New York to Maryland were therefore constituted one military department, the four south of the Potomac another; and on the first of March, six new generals of brigade were appointed. In the selection for Virginia there was difficulty: Patrick Henry had been the first colonel in her army; but the committee of safety did not favor his military ambition, and the prevailing opinion recalled him to civil life; in the judgment of Washington, "Mercer would have supplied the place well;" but he was a native of Scotland; so the choice fell upon Andrew Lewis, whose courage Washington did not question, but who still suffered from "the odium thrown upon his conduct at Kanawha," where he had lingered in his camp, while the officers

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CHAP. and men, whom he sent forth, with fearless gallantry
LX. and a terrible loss of life, shed over Virginia a lustre
1776. that reached to Tennessee and Kentucky. Congress
Mar. soon repented of its election; and in less than a year
forced Lewis to resign, by promoting an officer of very
little merit over his head.

To meet the expenses of the war, four millions of dollars in bills were ordered to be struck; which, with six millions already issued, would form a paper currency of ten millions. A few days later a committee of seven, including Duane and Robert Morris, was appointed on the ways and means of raising the supplies for the year, over and above the emission of bills of credit; but they never so much as made a report. Another committee was appointed, continued, and enlarged; and their labors were equally fruitless. Congress had neither credit to borrow nor power to tax.

An officious and unauthorized suggestion from Lord Drummond to send a deputation to England in quest of "liberal terms founded in equity and candor," could claim no notice; the want of supplies, which was so urgent that two thousand men in Washington's army were destitute of arms and unable to procure them, led to an appeal in a different direction; and Silas Deane,—a graduate of Yale College, at one time a schoolmaster, afterwards a trader; reputed in congress to be well versed in commercial affairs; superficial, yet able to write and speak readily and plausibly; wanting deliberate forecast, accurate information, solidity of judgment, secrecy, and integrity,—finding himself left out of the delegation from Connecticut, whose confidence he never pos-

sessed, solicited and received from the committee of secret correspondence an appointment as commercial commissioner and agent to France. That country, the committee instructed him to say, "is pitched upon for the first application, from an opinion that if we should, as there is appearance we shall, come to a total separation with Great Britain, France would be the power whose friendship it would be fittest for us to obtain and cultivate." The announcement was coupled with a request for clothing and arms for twenty five thousand men, a hundred fieldpieces, and a suitable quantity of ammunition.

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This was the act of a committee; congress was itself about to send commissioners to Canada, and their instructions, reported by John Adams, Wythe, and Sherman, contained this clause: "You are to declare, that it is our inclination that the people of Canada may set up such a form of government as will be most likely in their judgment to produce their happiness." This invitation to the Canadians to form a government without any limitation of time, was, for three or four hours, resisted by Jay and others, on the ground that it "was an independency;" but the words were adopted, and they foreshadowed a similar decision for each one of the United Colonies.

Congress had received the act of parliament prohibiting all trade with the thirteen colonies, and confiscating their ships and effects as if they were the ships and effects of open enemies. The first instinct was to retaliate; and on the sixteenth of March a committee of the whole considered the propriety of authorizing the inhabitants of the colonies to fit out privateers. Again it appeared that there

CHAP. were those who still listened to the hope of relief
LX. through Rockingham, or of redress through the royal
1776 commissioners, though the act of parliament conferred
Mar. on them no power but to pardon. On the other hand, Franklin wished that the measure should be preceded by a declaration of war, as of one independent nation against another. The question was resumed on the eighteenth; and after an able debate, privateers were authorized to cruise against ships and their cargoes, belonging to any inhabitant, not of Ireland or the West Indies, but of Great Britain, by the vote of all New England, New York, Virginia, and North Carolina, against Pennsylvania and Maryland. The other colonies were not sufficiently represented to give their voices.

On the nineteenth, Wythe, with Jay and Wilson, was appointed to prepare a preamble to the resolutions. Wythe found himself in a minority in the committee; and when, on the twenty second, he presented their report, he moved an amendment, charging the king himself with their grievances, inasmuch as he had "rejected their petitions with scorn and contempt." This was new ground; hitherto congress had disclaimed the authority of parliament, not allegiance to the crown. Jay, Wilson, and Johnson opposed the amendment, as effectually severing the king from the thirteen colonies forever; it was supported by Richard Henry Lee, who seconded it, by Chase, Sergeant of New Jersey, and Harrison. At the end of four hours Maryland interposed its veto, and thus put off the decision for a day; but on the twenty third, the language of Wythe was accepted.

The question of opening the ports, after having

been for months the chief subject of deliberation, was discussed through all the next fortnight. One kind of traffic which the European maritime powers still encouraged was absolutely forbidden, not from political reasons merely, but from a conviction of its unrighteousness and cruelty; and without any limitation as to time, or any reservation of a veto to the respective colonies, it was resolved, "that no slaves be imported into any of the thirteen United Colonies." The vote was pregnant with momentous consequences. From the activity of the trade in the preceding years, the negro race had been gaining relatively upon the white; and as its power consists in the combined force of its numbers and its intelligence, it might in some parts of the continent have endangered the supremacy of the white man; but he was sure to increase more rapidly than the negro, now that the continent was barred against further importations of slaves. The prohibition made moreover a revolution in the state of the black men already in America; from a body of laborers, many of them barbarians, perpetually recruited and increased from barbarous African tribes, they were transformed into an insulated class, living in a state of domesticity, dependent for culture, employment, and support on a superior race; and it was then the prevailing opinion, especially in Virginia, that the total prohibition of the slave trade would, at no very distant day, be followed by universal emancipation.

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The first who, as far as appears, suggested that negroes might be emancipated, and a "public provision be made to transport them to Africa, where they

CHAP. might probably live better than in any other country,"
 LX. was Samuel Hopkins, of Rhode Island, a divine, who
 1776. taught that, "through divine interposition, sin is an
 Apr. advantage to the universe;" a firm believer in the
 coming of the millennium; a theorist of high ideal
 conceptions, who held virtue to require more than
 disinterested love, a love that is willing to make a
 sacrifice of itself. Writing in a town which had
 grown rich by the slave trade, he addressed a long
 and elaborate memorial to the members of the conti-
 nental congress, "entreating them to be the happy
 instruments of procuring and establishing universal
 liberty to white and black, to be transmitted down to
 the latest posterity." His elaborate argument in due
 time had influence with some of them in their respec-
 tive states,¹ but after diligent search I cannot find
 that the document met with any notice whatever
 from the continental congress, which scrupulously re-
 served to the several colonies the modification of their
 internal policy.

Letters to members of congress expressed appre-
 hension lest the attempt to raise the slaves against
 their masters in Virginia should be followed by
 severity against the negro; but no member of con-
 gress of any other colony interposed with his advice
 or his opinions; and it is the concurrent testimony of
 all, that the Virginians conducted themselves towards
 the unfortunate race with moderation and tenderness,
 and that while their wrath at Dunmore swelled with a
 violence which overwhelmed their internal divisions,

¹ The Works of Samuel Hopkins, Park's Memoir of Hopkins, *ibid.* i.
 ii. 547-588. Boston edition, 1854. 117.

and made them well nigh unanimous for independence, it did not turn against the blacks, of whom even the insurgents, when taken captive, were treated with forbearance.

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The slave trade having been denied to be a legitimate traffic, and branded as a crime against humanity, at last, on the sixth day of April, the thirteen colonies threw open their commerce to all the world, "not subject to the king of Great Britain." In this manner the colonial system was swept away forever from the continent, and the flag of every nation invited to its harbors. The vote abolished the British custom-houses, and instituted none in their stead. Absolute free trade took the place of hoary restrictions; the products of the world could be imported from any place in any friendly bottom, and the products of American industry in like manner exported, without a tax.

This virtual declaration of independence, made with no limitation of time, brought the conflict between the congress and the proprietary government of Pennsylvania to a crisis, which presaged internal strife and a war of party against party. On the twenty eighth of February, the committee of correspondence of Philadelphia, against the wish of Joseph Reed, their chairman, resolved to call a convention of the people. This was the wisest measure that could have been proposed; and had Dickinson, Morris, and Reed, like Franklin, Clymer, and Mackean, joined heartily in its support, no conflict could have ensued, except between determined royalists and the friends of American liberty. The proprietary inter-

CHAP. est, by the instinct of self-preservation, repelled the
IX. thought of independence, wished for delay, and made
1776. no concessions but from fear of being superseded by
Apr. the people. And how could an assembly of men, who
before entering on their office took the vow of alle-
giance to the king, guide a revolution against his
sovereignty, or be fitly intrusted with the privilege
of electing delegates to the continental congress?
And at a time when all rightful power was held to
be derived from the people, was it proper for a gov-
ernment emanating from the king and having a de-
cided royalist at its head, to assume the reform of
civil institutions for the people of Pennsylvania?

But the fear of a convention gave the assembly
such a start, that the committee of correspondence
were persuaded to suspend its call. In the assembly
the party of resistance must rely chiefly on Dickin-
son, Morris, and Reed. But the logical contradiction
in the mind of Dickinson, which had manifested itself
in the Farmer's Letters, still perplexed his conduct.
His narrow breast had no room for the large counsels
of true wisdom; and he urged upon every individual
and every body of men over whom he had any influ-
ence the necessity of making terms of accommodation
with Great Britain. In this way he dulled the resent-
ment of the people, and paralyzed the manly impulse
of self-sacrificing courage. The royalists shored up
his declining importance, and, in their name, Inglis of
New York, for a time rector of Trinity church and
afterwards bishop of Nova Scotia, one of the bitterest
of partisans, publicly burned incense to his "native
candor, his unbounded benevolence, his acknowledged
humanity, his exalted virtue, as the illustrious de-

fender of the constitution against the syren form of independence." CHAP.
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Robert Morris, an Englishman by birth and in part by education, was a merchant of vast designs, and was indefatigable in the pursuit of gain; but he brought to the American cause courage and weight of character, "a masterly understanding, an open temper, and an honest heart." With union, he had "no doubt that the colonies could at their pleasure choose between a reconciliation and total independence;" and he opposed the latter, because he thought its agitation only tended to produce division, of which he dreaded "even the appearance;" but if the liberties of America could not otherwise be secured, he was ready to renounce the connection with Great Britain, and fight his way through. 1776.
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Reed, whose influence was enhanced by his possession of the intimate confidence of Washington, had neither the timidity of Dickinson nor the positiveness of Morris, and he carried into public affairs less passion than either. His heart sent out no tendrils to bind him closely to a party; he willingly left the outline of his opinions indistinct; and was led by his natural temper to desire a compromise between extremes. His wife was an Englishwoman, but she nobly encouraged him by her unaffected attachment to the American cause. His love for his rising and dependent family made him the more anxious to avoid a lee shore, and keep where there was room to tack and change. Elected as the candidate of the ardent patriots, his principles were naturally thought to militate against reconciliation; but in this they were much misunderstood: it was his judgment that

CHAP. the happiness and prosperity of America would best
LX. be promoted by dependence. In the hope of suf-
ficient concessions from England, he wished therefore
1776 to maintain the constituted proprietary assembly, to
Apr. prevent the call of a popular convention, and to delay
an irrevocable decision.

To check the popular movement, it was necessary to enlarge the representation, raise several battalions, and reverse the instructions to the Pennsylvania delegates. The assembly sat with closed doors, and all its proceedings manifest a good understanding with the proprietary and his friends. A bill for the increase of the popular representation by seventeen new members, of whom four were to be allowed to Philadelphia, was brought in by a committee of which Dickinson and Reed were the principal members; and the ayes and noes on the question of its adoption were ostentatiously put on record, making their omission on all other occasions the more significant. The act received the sanction of the proprietary governor, and the first day of May was appointed for the new elections. The house consented to raise three battalions; the proposal to extend conditionally the period of enlistment to the end of 1777, was carried only by the casting vote of the speaker. For answering the exigencies of the province, eighty five thousand pounds were ordered by the house to be forthwith struck in bills of credit. Then, on the sixth of April, after a long debate, of which there is no report, the house, just before its adjournment, decided by a great majority not to alter the instructions given at its last sitting to the delegates for the province in congress, and they were once more enjoined

to dissent from and utterly reject any proposition that might lead to a separation from the mother country, or a change of the proprietary government.

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This was the result which Dickinson desired; the support of the assembly of Pennsylvania soothed the irritation that attended his defeats in congress; but Morris was uneasy; "Where," he asked, "where are these commissioners? If they are to come, what is it that detains them? It is time we should be on a certainty."

Duane of New York, who like Robert Morris was prepared for extreme measures, if the British proposition should prove oppressive or frivolous, like Morris still desired delay. "I expect little," said he, "from the justice, and less from the generosity of administration; but the interest of Great Britain may compel her ministers to offer us reasonable terms; while commissioners are daily looked for, I am unwilling that we should by any irrevocable measure put it out of our power to terminate this destructive war; I wait for the expected propositions with painful anxiety."

Of this waiting for commissioners Samuel Adams made a scorn. His words were: "Is not America already independent? Why not, then, declare it? Because, say some, it will forever shut the door of reconciliation. But Britain will not be reconciled, except upon our abjectly submitting to tyranny, and asking and receiving pardon for resisting it." "Moderate gentlemen are flattering themselves with the prospect of reconciliation when the commissioners that are talked of shall arrive. But what terms are we to expect from them that will be acceptable to the people of

CHAP. America? Has the king of Great Britain ever yet
LX. discovered the least degree of that princely virtue—
1776. clemency? It is my opinion that his heart is more
Apr. obdurate and his disposition towards the people of
America is more unrelenting and malignant, than was
that of Pharaoh towards the Israelites in Egypt.”
“No foreign power can consistently yield comfort to
rebels, or enter into any kind of treaty with these
colonies, till they declare themselves independent.”
Yet Dickinson and others, among whom were found
William Livingston of New Jersey, and the elder
Laurens of South Carolina, wished to make no such
declaration before an alliance with the king of
France.

CHAPTER LXI.

TURGOT AND VERGENNES.

MARCH—MAY, 1776.

FOR a whole year the problem of granting aid to the American insurgents had under all its aspects been debated in the cabinet of the king of France, and had not yet found its solution. Louis the Sixteenth was a bigot to the principle of regal power; but George the Third wanted, in his eyes, the seal of legitimacy: his sense of right, which prompted him to keep good faith with the English, was confused by assertions that the British ministry was capable of breaking the existing peace without a warning, if it could thus win the favor of the people, or votes in parliament: he disliked to help rebels; but these rebels were colonists, and his kingdom could recover its share in the commerce of the world only by crushing the old colonial system, from which France had been shut out. He had heard and had read very much on the subject, but without arriving at a conclusion. His ministers were irreconcilably divided. Vergennes pro-

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moted the emancipation of America with resoluteness and prudence, remaining always master of himself, and always mindful that he was a subordinate in the cabinet of which he was in truth the stay and the guide. As minister of foreign affairs, he employed French diplomacy to bring in a steady current of opinion and statements that would supersede the necessity of his advice, which was given so tardily and so calmly, that it seemed to flow not from himself but from his attachment to monarchy and to France. The quiet and uniform influence of his department slowly and imperceptibly overcame the scruples of the young and inexperienced prince, whose instincts were dull, and whose reflective powers could not grasp the question. Sartine, the minister of the marine, and St. Germain, the new secretary of war, who had been called from retirement and poverty to reform the abuses in the French army, sustained the system of Vergennes. On the other side, Maurepas, the head of the cabinet, was for peace, though his frivolity and desire to please left his opinions to the control of circumstances. Peace was the wish of Malesherbes, who had the firmness of sincerity, yet was a man of meditation and study rather than of action; and Turgot, who excelled them all in administrative ability, and was the ablest minister of finance that ever served a Bourbon, was immovable in his opposition to a war with Britain.

The faithful report from Bonvouloir, the French agent at Philadelphia, reached Vergennes in the very first days of March; and furnished him an occasion for bringing before the king with unusual solemnity these "considerations:"

“The position of England towards its colonies in North America, and the possible and probable consequences of the contest, whatever its issue may be, have beyond a doubt every claim to the most serious attention of France and Spain. Whether they should desire the subjection or the independence of the English colonies, is problematical; on either hypothesis they are menaced with danger, which human forecast can perhaps neither prevent nor turn aside.

“If the continuation of the civil war may be regarded as infinitely advantageous to the two crowns, inasmuch as it will exhaust the victors and the vanquished, there is, on the other hand, room to fear, first, that the English ministry, feeling the insufficiency of its means, may stretch out the hand of conciliation; or, secondly, that the king of England, after conquering English America, may use it as an instrument to subjugate European England; or, thirdly, that the English ministry, beaten on the continent of America, may seek indemnity at the expense of France and Spain, to efface their shame, and to conciliate the insurgents by offering them the commerce and supply of the isles; or, fourthly, that the colonists, on attaining independence, may become conquerors from necessity, and by forcing their excess of produce upon Spanish America, destroy the ties which bind our colonies to their metropolis.

“These different suppositions can almost equally conduct to war with France and Spain; on the first, because England will be tempted, by the large force she has prepared, to make the too easy conquests of which the West Indies offer the opportunity; on the second, because the enslavement of the metropo-

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“The state of the colonies of the two nations is such, that, with the exception of Havana, perhaps no one is in a condition to resist the smallest part of the forces which England now sends to America. The physical possibility of the conquest is, therefore, too evident; as to the moral probability of an invasion, which would be unprovoked and contrary to public faith and to treaties, we should abuse ourselves strangely by believing the English susceptible of being held back by such motives. Experience has but too well proved, that they regard as just and honorable whatever is advantageous to their own nation or destructive to their rivals. Their statesmen never calculate the actual amount of ill which France does them, but the amount of ill which she may one day be able to do them. The opposition seem to have embraced the same general maxims; and the ministry may seize the only way of extricating themselves from their embarrassment, by giving up the reins to Chatham, who, with Shelburne, Sandwich, Richmond, and Weymouth, may come to terms with the Americans, and employ the enormous mass of forces put in activity, to rectify the conditions of the last treaty of peace, against which they have ever passionately protested. Englishmen of all parties are persuaded that a popular war against France or an invasion of Mexico would terminate, or at least allay, their domestic dis-

sensions, as well as furnish resources for the extinguishment of their national debt.

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“In the midst of so many perils, the strong love of peace, which is the preference of the king and the king of Spain, seems to prescribe the most measured course. If the dispositions of these two princes were for war, if they were disposed to follow the impulse of their interests and perhaps of the justice of their cause, which is the cause of humanity, so often outraged by England, if their military and financial means were in a state of development proportionate to their substantial power, it would, without doubt, be necessary to say to them, that Providence has marked out this moment for the humiliation of England, that it has struck her with the blindness which is the surest precursor of destruction, and that it is time to avenge upon her the evils which since the commencement of the century she has inflicted on those who have had the misfortune to be her neighbors or her rivals. It would then be necessary not to neglect any of the means suited to render the next campaign as animated as possible and procure advantages to the Americans; and the degree of passion and exhaustion would determine the moment to strike the decisive blows, which would make England step back into the rank of secondary powers, ravish from her the empire which she claims in the four quarters of the world, and deliver the universe from a greedy tyrant who is bent on absorbing all power and all wealth. But this is not the point of view chosen by the two monarchs; and their part appears under actual circumstances to limit itself, with one exception, to a circumspect but active foresight.

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“Care must be taken to avoid being compromised, and not to provoke the ills which it is wished to prevent; yet we must not flatter ourselves, that the most absolute and the most rigorous inaction will guarantee us from suspicion. The continuance of the war for at least one year is desirable for the two crowns. To that end the British ministry must be maintained in the persuasion that France and Spain are pacific, so that it may not fear to embark in an active and costly campaign; whilst on the other hand the courage of the Americans might be kept up by secret favors and vague hopes, which would prevent an accommodation, and assist to develop ideas of independence. The evils which the British will make them suffer, will imbitter their minds; their passions will be more and more inflamed by the war; and should the mother country be victorious, she would for a long time need all her strength to keep down their spirit; so that she would never dare to expose herself to their efforts for the recovery of their liberty in connection with a foreign enemy.

“If all these considerations are judged to be as true and as well grounded as they are probable, we ought to continue with dexterity to tranquillize the English ministry as to the intentions of France and Spain. It will also be proper for the two monarchies to extend to the insurgents secret aid in military stores and money, without seeking any return for it beyond the political object of the moment; but it would not comport with the dignity or interest of the king to treat with the insurgents, till the liberty of English America shall have acquired consistency.

“It is at all times useful and proper, in this mo-

ment of public danger it is indispensable, to raise the effective force of the two monarchies to the height of their real power; for of all conjectures which circumstances authorize, the least probable is, that peace can be preserved, whatever may be the issue of the present war between England and her colonies.

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“Such are the principal points of view which this important problem admits of, and which have been simply indicated to the wisdom and penetration of the king and of his council.”

This discussion of America was simultaneous with the passionate opposition of the aristocracy of France to the reforms of Turgot. The parliament of Paris had just refused to register the royal edicts which he had wisely prepared for the relief of the peasants and the mechanics of the kingdom. “Ah,” said the king, as he heard of its contumacy, “I see plainly there is no one who loves the people but Turgot and I;” and the registration of the decrees was carried through only by the extreme exercise of his prerogative against a remonstrance of the aristocracy, who to the last resisted the measures of justice to the laboring classes, as “confounding the nobility and the clergy with the rest of the people.”

The king directed Vergennes to communicate his memorial on the colonies to Turgot, whose written opinion upon it was required. Vergennes obeyed, recommending to his colleague secrecy and celerity, for Spain was anxiously waiting the determination of the court of France. Turgot took more than three weeks for deliberation, allowed full course to his ideas, and on the sixth of April gave the king this advice:

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“Whatever may or ought to be the wish of the two crowns, nothing can arrest the course of events which sooner or later will certainly bring about the absolute independence of the English colonies, and, as an inevitable consequence, effect a total revolution in the relations of Europe and America. Of all the suppositions that can be made on the event of this war, the reduction of these colonies by England presents to the two crowns the perspective of the most lasting quiet. The Anglo-American enthusiasts for liberty may be overwhelmed by force, but their will can never be broken. If their country is laid waste, they may disperse themselves among the boundless backwoods, inaccessible to a European army, and from the depths of their retreats be always ready to trouble the English establishments on their coasts; while England would lose all the advantages that she has thus far derived from America in peace and war. If it is reduced without a universal devastation, the courage of the colonists will be like a spring, which remains bent only so long as an undiminished pressure weighs it down. If my view is just, if the complete success of the English ministry would be the most fortunate result for France and Spain, it follows that the project of that ministry is the most extravagant which could be conceived; and of this very few persons will doubt.

“Should the English government, after painful and costly efforts, fail in its hostile plans against the colonies, it will hardly be disposed at once to multiply its enemies, and form enterprises for compensation at the expense of France and Spain, when it will

have lost the point of support which could alone have made success probable.

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“The present war will probably end in the absolute independence of the colonies, and that event will certainly be the epoch of the greatest revolution in the commerce and politics not of England only but of all Europe. From the prudent conduct, the courage, and intelligence of the Americans, we may augur that they will take care, above all things, to give a solid form to their government, and as a consequence they will love peace, and seek to preserve it.

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“The rising republic will have no need of conquests to find a market for its products; it will have only to open its harbors to all nations. Sooner or later, with good will or from necessity, all European nations who have colonies will be obliged to leave them an entire liberty of trade, to regard them no more as subject provinces, but as friendly states, distinct and separate, even if protected. This the independence of the English colonies will inevitably hasten. Then the illusion which has lulled our politicians for two centuries, will be dispelled; it will be seen that power founded on monopoly is precarious and frail, and that the restrictive system was useless and chimerical at the very time when it dazzled the most.

“When the English themselves shall recognise the independence of their colonies, every mother country will be forced in like manner to exchange its dominion over its colonies for bonds of friendship and fraternity. If this is an evil, there is no way of preventing it, and no course to be taken but resignation to the absolute necessity. The powers which

CHAP. shall obstinately resist, will none the less see their
 LXL colonies escape from them, to become their enemies
 1776. instead of their allies.

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“The yearly cost of colonies in peace, the enormous expenditures for their defence in war, lead to the conclusion that it is more advantageous for us to grant them entire independence, without waiting for the moment when events will compel us to give them up. This view would not long since have been scorned as a paradox, and rejected with indignation. At present we may be the less revolted at it, and perhaps it may not be without utility to prepare consolation for inevitable events. Wise and happy will be that nation which shall first know how to bend to the new circumstances, and consent to see in its colonies allies and not subjects. When the total separation of America shall have healed the European nations of the jealousy of commerce, there will exist among men one great cause of war the less, and it is very difficult not to desire an event which is to accomplish this good for the human race. In our colonies we shall save many millions, and if we acquire the liberty of commerce and navigation with all the northern continent, we shall be amply compensated.

“The position of Spain with regard to its American possessions will be more embarrassing. Unhappily she has less facility than any other power to quit the route that she has followed for two centuries, and conform to a new order of things. Thus far she has directed her policy to maintaining the multiplied prohibitions with which she has embarrassed her commerce. She has made no preparations to substitute for empire over her American provinces a fra-

ternal connection founded on the identity of origin, language, and manners, without the opposition of interests; to offer them liberty as a gift, instead of yielding it to force. Nothing is more worthy of the wisdom of the king of Spain and his council, than from this present time to fix their attention on the possibility of this forced separation, and on the measures to be taken to prepare for it.

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“It is a very delicate question, to know if we can underhand help the Americans to ammunition or money. There is no difficulty in shutting our eyes on their purchases in our ports; our merchants are free to sell to any who will buy of them; we do not distinguish the colonists from the English themselves; but to aid the Americans with money would excite in the English just complaints.

“The idea of sending troops and squadrons into our colonies for their security against invasion, must be rejected as ruinous, insufficient, and dangerous. We ought to limit ourselves to measures of caution less expensive, and less approaching to a state of hostility; to precipitate nothing unless the conduct of England shall give us reason to believe that she really thinks of attacking us.

“Combining all circumstances, it may certainly be believed that the English ministry does not desire war, and our preparations ought to tend only to the maintenance of peace. Peace is the preference of the king of France and the king of Spain. Every plan of aggression ought to be rejected, first of all from moral reasons. To these are to be added the reasons of interest, drawn from the situation of the two powers. Spain has not in her magazines the requirements

CHAP. for arming ships of war, and cannot in time of need
 LXI. assemble a due number of sailors, nor count on the
 1776. ability and experience of her naval officers. Her
 Apr. finances are not involved, but they could not suffice
 for years of extraordinary efforts.

“As for us, the king knows the situation of his finances; he knows that in spite of economies and ameliorations already made since the beginning of his reign, the expenditure exceeds the receipts by twenty millions; the deficit can be made good only by an increase of taxes, a partial bankruptcy, or frugality. The king from the first has rejected the method of bankruptcy, and that of an increase of taxes in time of peace; but frugality is possible, and requires nothing but a firm will. While the king found his finances involved, he found his army and navy in a state of weakness that was scarcely to have been imagined. For a necessary war, resources could be found; but war ought to be shunned as the greatest of misfortunes, since it would render impossible, perhaps for ever, a reform, absolutely necessary to the prosperity of the state and the solace of the people.”

Turgot had been one of the first to foretell and to desire the independence of the colonies, as the means of regenerating the world; his virtues made him worthy to have been the fellow laborer of Washington; but as a minister of France, with the superior sagacity of integrity in its combination with genius, he looked at passing events through the clear light, free from refraction or distortion.

The public mind in France applied itself to improving the condition of the common people; Chastellux, in his work on public felicity, which was just

then circulating in Paris, with the motto NEVER DESPAIR, represented as "the unique end of all government and the universal aim of all philosophy, the greatest happiness of the greatest number;" Turgot, by his earnest purpose to restrain profligate expenditure and lighten the grievous burdens of the laboring classes, seemed called forth by Providence to prop the falling throne, and hold back the nobility from the fathomless chaos towards which they were drifting. Yet he could look nowhere for support but to the king, who was unenlightened, with no fixed principle, and, therefore, naturally inclined to distrust. Malesherbes, in despair, resolved to retire. Maurepas, who professed, like Turgot, a preference for peace, could not conceive the greatness of his soul, and beheld in him a dangerous rival, whose activity and vigor exposed his own insignificance to public shame. The keeper of the seals, a worthless man, given up to intemperance, greedy of the public money, which without a change in the head of the treasury he could not get either by gift or by embezzlement, nursed this jealousy; and setting himself up as the champion of the aristocracy, he prompted Maurepas to say to the king, that Turgot was an enemy to religion and the royal authority, disposed to annihilate the privileges of the nobility, and to overturn the state.

Sartine had always supported the American policy of Vergennes, and had repeatedly laid before the king his views on the importance and utility of the French colonies, and on the condition of India. "If the navy of France," said he, "were at this moment able to act, France never had a fairer opportunity to avenge the unceasing insults of the English. I beseech your ma-

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CHAP. jesty to consider that England, by its most cherished
LXI. interests, its national character, its form of gov-
ernment, and its position, is and always will be the
1776 true, the unique, and the eternal enemy of France.
Apr. Sire, with England no calculation is admissible but
that of her interests and her caprices; that is, of the
harm that she can do us. In 1755, at a time of per-
fect peace, the English attacked your ships, proving
that they hold nothing sacred. We have every
reason to fear, that whatever may be the issue of their
war with the insurgents, they will take advantage of
their armament to fall upon your colonies or ports.
Your minister would be chargeable with guilt, if he
did not represent to your majesty the necessity of
adopting the most efficacious measures to parry the
bad faith of your natural enemies."

These suggestions were received with a passive acquiescence; the king neither comprehended nor heeded Turgot's advice, which was put aside by Vergennes as speculative and irrelevant. The correspondence with Madrid continued; Grimaldi, the Genoese adventurer, who still was minister for foreign affairs, complained of England for the aid it had rendered the enemies of Spain in Morocco, in Algeria, and near the Philippine Isles, approved of sending aid clandestinely to the English colonies, and in an autograph letter, despatched without the knowledge even of the ambassadors of the two courts, promised to bear a part of the expense, provided the supplies could be sent from French ports in such a manner that the participation of the Catholic king could be disavowed. When, on Friday, the twenty sixth of April, the French ministry held a conference with the

Spanish ambassador, to consider the dangers that menaced the two kingdoms and the necessity of preparing for war, neither Turgot nor Malesherbes was present. Vergennes was left to pursue his own policy without obstruction, and he followed the precedent set by England during the troubles in Corsica. After a year's hesitation and resistance, the king of France, early in May, informed the king of Spain that he had resolved, under the name of a commercial house, to advance a million of French livres, about two hundred thousand dollars, towards the supply of the wants of the Americans; the Catholic king, after a few weeks' delay, using the utmost art to conceal his act, assigning a false reason at his own treasury for demanding the money, and admitting no man in Spain into the secret of its destination except Grimaldi, remitted to Paris a draft for a million more, as his contribution. Beaumarchais, who was trusted in the American business and in eighteen months had made eight voyages to London, had been very fretful, as if the scheme which he had importunately urged upon the king had been censured and rejected. "I sat long in the pit," so Vergennes defended himself, "before I took a part on the stage; I have known men of all classes and of every temper of mind; in general, they all railed and found fault; and yet I have seen them in their turn commit the errors which they had so freely condemned; for an active or a passive principle, call it as you will, draws men always towards a common centre. Do not think advice rejected, because it is not eagerly adopted; all slumber is not a lethargy." The French court resolved to increase its

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CHAP. LXI. subsidy, which was to encourage the insurgents to
persevere; and in early summer, Beaumarchais an-
1776. nounced to Arthur Lee, at his chambers in the Tem-
ple, that he was authorized to promise the Americans
assistance to the amount of two hundred thousand
louis d'ors, nearly one million of dollars.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE CAROLINAS AND RHODE ISLAND.

FEBRUARY—MAY, 1776.

THE American congress needed an impulse from the resolute spirit of some colonial convention, and an example of a government springing wholly from the people. Massachusetts had followed closely the forms of its charter; New Hampshire had deviated as little as possible from its former system; neither of the two had appointed a chief executive officer. On the eighth of February the convention of South Carolina, by Drayton, their president, presented their thanks to John Rutledge and Henry Middleton for their services in the American congress, which had made its appeal to the King of kings, established a navy, treasury, and general post-office, exercised control over commerce, and granted to colonies permission to create civil institutions, independent of the regal authority.

The next day Gadsden arrived, and in like manner heard the voice of public gratitude; in return, he presented the standard which was to be used by the

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American navy, representing in a yellow field a rattlesnake of thirteen full-grown rattles, coiled to strike, with the motto: DON'T TREAD ON ME. When, on the tenth, the report on reforming the provincial government was considered, and many hesitated, Gadsden spoke out not only for the new constitution, but for the absolute independence of America. The sentiment came like a thunderbolt upon the members, of whom the majority had thus far refused to contemplate the end towards which they were irresistibly impelled. One member avowed his willingness to ride post by day and night to Philadelphia, in order to assist in reuniting Great Britain and her colonies; another heaped the coarsest abuse upon the author of Common Sense: but meanwhile the criminal laws could not be enforced for want of officers; public and private affairs were running into confusion; the imminent danger of invasion was proved by intercepted letters; so that necessity compelled the adoption of some adequate system of rule.

While a committee of eleven was preparing the organic law, Gadsden, on the thirteenth, began to act as senior officer of the army. Measures of defence were vigorously pursued, companies of militia called down to Charleston, and the military forces augmented by two regiments of riflemen. In the early part of the year Sullivan's Island was a wilderness; near the present fort, the wet ground was thickly covered with myrtle, live oak, and palmettos; there, on the second of March, William Moultrie was ordered to take the command, and complete a fort large enough to hold a garrison of a thousand men. The colony, which had already issued one million one hundred

and twenty thousand pounds of paper money, voted an additional sum of seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

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A strong party in the provincial congress, under the lead of Rawlins Lowndes, endeavored to postpone the consideration of the form of government reported by the committee; but the nearness of danger would not admit of delay; and the clauses that were most resisted, were adopted by a vote of about four to three. But when, on the twenty first of March, they received the act of parliament of the preceding December, which authorized the capture of American vessels and property, they gave up the hope of reconciliation; and on the twenty sixth, professing a desire of accommodation with Great Britain even "though traduced and treated as rebels," asserting "the good of the people to be the origin and end of all government," and enumerating with clearness and fulness the unwarrantable acts of the British parliament, the implacability of the king, and the violence of the officers bearing his commission, they established a constitution for South Carolina. The executive power was intrusted to a president, who was endowed with a veto on legislation, and who was also commander in chief; the congress then in session resolved itself into a general assembly, till their successors should be elected by the people in the following October; the numerous and arbitrary representation which had prevailed originally in the committee of 1774, and had been continued in the first and second congress of 1775, without respect to numbers or property, was confirmed by the new instrument, so that Charleston kept the right of sending thirty members; the old

CHAP. laws prescribing the qualifications of the electors and
LXII. the elected were continued in force; a legislative
1776 council of thirteen was elected by the general assem-
Mar. bly out of their own body; the general assembly and
the legislative council elected jointly by ballot the
president and vice president; the privy council of
seven was composed of the vice president, three
members chosen by ballot by the assembly, and
three by the legislative council; the judges were
chosen by ballot jointly by the two branches of the
legislature, by whose address they might be removed,
though otherwise they were to hold office during good
behavior.

On the twenty seventh, John Rutledge was chosen president, Henry Laurens vice president, and William Henry Drayton chief justice. On accepting office, Rutledge addressed the general assembly: "To preside over the welfare of a brave and generous people is in my opinion the highest honor any man can receive; I wish that your choice had fallen upon one better qualified to discharge the arduous duties of this station; yet in so perilous a season as the present, I will not withhold my best services. I assure myself of receiving the support and assistance of every good man in the colony; and my most fervent prayer to the omnipotent Ruler of the universe is, that, under his gracious providence, the liberties of America may be forever preserved."

On the twenty eighth the oaths of office were administered; then, to make a formal promulgation of the new constitution, the council and assembly, preceded by the president and vice president, and the

sheriff bearing the sword of state, walked out in a solemn procession from the State-house to the Exchange, in the presence of the troops and the militia of South Carolina, whose line extended down Broad street and along the bay; the people, as they crowded with transport round the men whom they had chosen to office, whom they had raised to power from among themselves, whom they for any misconduct could displace, whom they knew, and loved, and revered, gazed on the new order with rapture and tears of joy.

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Early in April the legislative bodies, while they declared that they still earnestly desired an accommodation with Great Britain, addressed the president: "Conscious of our natural and unalienable rights, and determined to make every effort to retain them, we see your elevation, from the midst of us, to govern this country, as the natural consequence of unprovoked, cruel, and accumulated oppressions. Chosen by the suffrages of a free people, you will make the constitution the great rule of your conduct; in the discharge of your duties under that constitution we will support you with our lives and fortunes."

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The condition of South Carolina was peculiar: a large part of its population was British by birth, and many of the herdsmen and hunters in the upper country had not been on the continent more than ten years; they had taken no part in the movements of resistance; had sent no gifts to the poor of Boston, no pledges to Massachusetts. At least one half of the inhabitants were either inert and unmoved, or more ready to take part with the king than with the insurgents. When the planters who were natives of the

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colony, risked their fortunes, the peace of their families, and their lives, from sympathy with a distant colony with which they had no similarity of pursuits, no considerable commerce, and no personal intimacies, they had in their rear a population still attached to the crown, as well as hostile Indian tribes; in their houses and on their estates numerous bondmen of a different race; along the sea an unprotected coast, indented by bays, and inlets, and rivers. But their spirit rose with danger; in words penned by Drayton and Cotesworth Pinckney, the assembly condemned the British plan of sending commissioners to treat with the several colonies, as a fraudulent scheme for subverting their liberties by negotiations, and resolved to communicate with the court of Great Britain only through the continental congress.

When, on the eleventh of April, they closed their session, Rutledge, knowing well that the wished-for accommodation with Great Britain could never be obtained, and willing to sacrifice every temporal happiness to establish and perpetuate the freedom of Carolina, cheered them on towards the consciousness of having formed an independent republic.

"On my part," said he, "a most solemn oath has been taken for the faithful discharge of my duty; on yours, a solemn assurance has been given to support me therein. Thus, a public compact between us stands recorded. I shall keep this oath ever in mind; the constitution shall be the invariable rule of my conduct; our laws and religion, and the liberties of America, shall be maintained and defended to the utmost of my power: I repose the most perfect confidence in your engagement. And now, gentlemen,

let me entreat that if any persons in your several parishes and districts are still strangers to the nature and merits of the dispute between Great Britain and the colonies, you will explain it to them fully, and teach them, if they are so unfortunate as not to know, their inherent rights. Relate to them the various unjust and cruel statutes which the British parliament have enacted, and the many sanguinary measures to enforce an unlimited and destructive claim. The endeavors to engage barbarous nations to imbrue their hands in the innocent blood of helpless women and children, and the attempts to make ignorant domestics subservient to the most wicked purposes, are acts at which humanity must revolt.

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“Show your constituents, then, the indispensable necessity which there was for establishing some mode of government in this colony; the benefits of that which a full and free representation has established; and that the consent of the people is the origin, and their happiness the end, of government. Let it be known that this constitution is but temporary, till an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America can be obtained, and that such an event is still desired. Disdaining private interest and present emolument, when placed in competition with the liberties of millions, and seeing no alternative but unconditional submission, or a defence becoming men born to freedom, no man who is worthy of life, liberty, or property, will hesitate about the choice. Although superior force may lay waste our towns and ravage our country, it can never eradicate from the breasts of free men those principles which are ingrafted in their very nature. Such men will

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do their duty, neither knowing nor regarding consequences, but trusting that the Almighty arm, which has been so signally stretched out for our defence, will deliver them in a righteous cause.

“The eyes of the whole world are on America; the eyes of every other colony are on this; a colony, whose reputation for generosity and magnanimity is universally acknowledged. I trust it will not be diminished by our future conduct; that there will be no civil discord here; and that the only strife amongst brethren will be, who shall do most to serve and to save an injured country.”

The word which South Carolina hesitated to pronounce, was uttered by North Carolina. That colony, proud of its victory over domestic enemies, and roused to defiance by the presence of Clinton, the British general, in one of their rivers, met in congress at Halifax on the fourth of April, on the eighth appointed a select committee, of which Harnett was the head, to consider the usurpations and violences of the British parliament and king, and on the twelfth, after listening to its report, unanimously “empowered their delegates in the continental congress to concur with the delegates of the other colonies in declaring independency and forming foreign alliances.” At the same time they reserved to their colony the sole right of forming its own constitution and laws.

North Carolina was the first colony to vote an explicit sanction to independence; South Carolina won from all patriots equal praise by her “virtuous and glorious example of instituting a complete government.” When, on the twenty third of April, the courts of justice were opened with solemnity at

Charleston, the chief justice, after an elaborate deduction, charged the grand jury in these words: "The law of the land authorizes me to declare, and it is my duty to declare the law, that George the Third, king of Great Britain, has abdicated the government, that he has no authority over us, and we owe no obedience to him.

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"It has been the policy of the British authority to cramp and confine our trade so as to be subservient to their commerce, our real interest being ever out of the question; the new constitution is wisely adapted to enable us to trade with foreign nations, and thereby to supply our wants at the cheapest markets in the universe; to extend our trade infinitely beyond what has ever been known; to encourage manufactures among us; and to promote the happiness of the people, from among whom, by virtue and merit, the poorest man may arrive at the highest dignity. Oh, Carolinians! happy would you be under this new constitution, if you knew your happy state.

"True reconciliation never can exist between Great Britain and America, the latter being in subjection to the former. The Almighty created America to be independent of Britain; to refuse our labors in this divine work, is to refuse to be a great, a free, a pious, and a happy people!"

The great abilities of Rutledge were equal to the office which he had fearlessly accepted; order and method grew at once out of the substitution of a single executive for committees; from him the officers of the regiments, as well as of the militia, derived their commissions; to prepare for the British army and

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naval squadron which were known to be on the way, the mechanics and laborers of Charleston, assisted by great numbers of negroes from the country, were employed in fortifying the town. When in April, under the orders of the continental congress, the veteran Armstrong arrived to take the command of the army, he found little more to do than receive the hospitalities of the inhabitants.

- Mar. The designs against the Carolinas left Virginia free from invasion. Lee, on his arrival at Williamsburg, took up his quarters in the palace of the governor; querulous as ever, he praised the provincial congress of New York as "angels of decision" compared with the Virginia committee of safety. Yet his reputation insured deference to his advice; and at his instance, directions were given for the removal of all inhabitants from the exposed parts of Norfolk and Princess Anne counties; an inconsiderate order which it was soon found necessary to mitigate or rescind.
- Apr. Letters, intercepted in April, indicated some concert of action on the part of Eden, the governor of Maryland, with Dunmore: Lee, though Maryland was not within his district, and in contempt of the regularly appointed committee of that colony, directed Samuel Purviance, of the committee of Baltimore, to seize Eden without ceremony or delay. The interference was resented as an insult on the authority which the people had constituted; the Maryland committee, even after the continental congress directed his arrest, still avoided a final rupture with British authority, and suffered their governor to remain at liberty on his parole.

- May. The spirit of temporizing showed itself still more

clearly in Philadelphia. The moderate men, as they were called, who desired a reconciliation with Great Britain upon the best terms she would give, but at any rate a reconciliation, held many meetings to prepare for the election of the additional burgesses who were to be chosen in May; and when the day of election came, the friends of independence carried only Clymer; the moderate men, combining with the proprietary party, the officers of the provincial government, the avowed tories, and such of the Roman Catholics as could not control their antipathy to the Presbyterians, elected the three others. The elections in the country were also not wholly unfavorable to the interests of the proprietary. Yet as independence was become inevitable, the result only foreboded a bitter internal strife. Neither was the success of the proprietary party a fair expression of public opinion: the franchise in the city was confined to those possessing fifty pounds; Germans, who composed a large part of the inhabitants of the province and were zealots for liberty, were not allowed to give their votes unless they were naturalized, and could not be naturalized without taking the oath of allegiance to the king; moreover, of the natives of Pennsylvania, many hundreds of the warmest patriots had been carried by their public spirit to the camp on the Hudson, and even to Canada; leaving power in the hands of the timid, who remained at home.

The despondency and hesitation of the assembly of Pennsylvania was in marked contrast with the fortitude of Rhode Island, whose general assembly, on the fourth day of May, passed an act discharging the inhabitants of that colony from allegiance to the king

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CHAP. of Great Britain. The measure was carried in the
LXII. upper house unanimously, and in the house of depu-
1776. ties, where sixty were present, with but six dissen-
May. tient voices. The overturn was complete; the act
was at once a declaration of independence, and an
organization of a self-constituted republic. Its first
exercise of independent power authorized its dele-
gates in congress to join in treating with any prince,
state, or potentate, for the security of the colonies.
It also directed them to favor the most proper meas-
ures for confirming the strictest union; yet at the
same time they were charged "to secure to the col-
ony, in the strongest and most perfect manner, its
present established form and all powers of govern-
ment, so far as they relate to its internal police, and
the conduct of its own affairs, civil and religious."

The interest of the approaching campaign centred in New York, to which place Washington had repaired with all his forces that were not ordered to Canada. At New York the British government designed to concentrate its strength, in the hopes of overwhelming all resistance in one campaign. Meantime, the British general, who had fled from Boston so precipitately that he had been obliged to remain several days in Nantasket Road to adjust his ships for the voyage, was awaiting reënforcements at Halifax; and during the interval he was willing that the attempt on the Southern colonies should be continued. That expedition had been planned in October by the king himself, "whose solicitude for pursuing with vigor every measure that tended to crush the present dangerous rebellion in the colonies, excited in him the most exemplary attention to every object of advan-

tage." But delays, as usual, intervened. The instructions to Clinton were not finished till December, nor received by him till May. He was to issue a proclamation of pardon to all but "the principal instigators and abettors of the rebellion, to dissolve the provincial congresses and committees of safety, to restore the regular administration of justice, to arrest the persons and destroy the property of all who should refuse to give satisfactory tests of their obedience." From North Carolina he might proceed at his own choice either to Virginia or to South Carolina, in like manner "to seize the persons and destroy the property of rebels wherever it could be done with effect." In South Carolina he was to attack and reduce Charleston, as a prelude to the fall of Savannah, and to the restoration of the whole of the sea-coast to the king's government.

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The fleet and transports designed to act under Clinton, did not leave Cork harbor till February; they were scattered by a storm soon after going to sea; for two weeks they met constant and most violent adverse gales; they long continued to be delayed by contrary winds; and not till the third of May, after a passage of more than eighty days, did Sir Peter Parker, Cornwallis, and such ships as kept them company, enter Cape Fear River. Most of the transports had arrived before them.

All joined "to lament the fatal delays." What was to be done with the formidable armament, was the first question for deliberation. Clinton inclined to look into the Chesapeake, which would bring him nearer New York; but Lord William Campbell earnestly urged upon Sir Peter Parker an attack on

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Charleston; and as intelligence was received, "that the works erected by the rebels on Sullivan's Island, which was the key to the harbor, were in an imperfect and unfinished state, Clinton was induced to acquiesce in the proposal of the commodore to attempt the reduction of that fortress by a sudden attack," to be followed up by such other immediate efforts as might be invited by "a moral certainty of rapid success."

With these purposes, the British prepared to retire from North Carolina; but Martin, before leaving his government, sent a party to burn the house of Hooper, a delegate in the continental congress; Cornwallis, with nine hundred men,—it was his first exploit in America,—landed in Brunswick county, and with a loss of two men killed and one taken prisoner, burned and ravaged the plantation of the North Carolina brigadier, Robert Howe; and Sir Henry Clinton, in conformity with his instructions from the king, issued his proclamation on the fifth of May, against committees and congresses, and inviting the people "to appease the vengeance of an incensed nation," offered pardon to all who would submit, except Robert Howe and Cornelius Harnett.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE WAY TO RESTORE PEACE.

MAY, 1776.

HOPE still rested on the royal commissioners for restoring peace; but the British ministers knew nothing of that great science of government which studies the character, innate energies, and dispositions of a people. The statesman, like others, can command nature only by obeying her laws; he can serve man only by respecting the conditions of his being; he can sway a nation only by penetrating what is at work in the mind of its masses, and taking heed of the state of its development; any attempt in that day to produce in Britain republics like those of New England, could have brought forth nothing but anarchy and civil war; the blind resolve to conform American institutions to the pattern of the British aristocracy, led to a revolution.

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In its policy towards America, Britain was at war with itself: its own government was distinguished by being a limited one; and yet it claimed for the

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king in parliament unlimited power over the colonies. Sandwich was impatient of all restraints on their administration; he desired to exercise over them nothing short of a full and absolute authority, and regretted that the government was cramped by the cry of liberty, with which no chief executive power was troubled except that of England.

Had conciliation been designed, the commissioners would have been despatched long before; but the measure which had for its object the pacification of English opinion, was suffered to drag along for more than a year, till the news that Howe had been driven from Boston burst upon the public, and precipitated the counsels of the ministry.

The letters patent for the commissioners, which were issued on the sixth of May, conferred power on Lord Howe and General Howe, jointly and severally, to grant pardons to such as should give early proofs of their sincere abhorrence of their defection from loyalty, and should duly sue for mercy. The two points in controversy were the right of taxation, and the repeal of the changes in the charter of Massachusetts. Lord North, when he relapsed into his natural bias towards justice, used to say publicly that the right of taxation was abandoned; Germain always asserted that it was not. The instructions to the commissioners were founded upon the resolution of the twentieth of February, 1775; which the colonies had solemnly declared to be insufficient. The parliamentary change in the charter of Massachusetts was to be enforced; and secret instructions required that Connecticut and Rhode Island should be compelled, if possible, to accept analogous changes; so that not only was uncon-

ditional submission required, but in the moment of victory other colonial charters were still further to be violated; in order to carry out the system which the king had pursued from the time of the ministry of Bute. Lord Howe wished well to the Americans, kept up his friendly relations with Chatham, and escaped the suspicion of a subservient complicity with the administration. It was said by his authority, that he would not go to America unless he had powers to treat on terms of conciliation; he refused to accept a civilian as his colleague, and though his brother was named with him in the commission, he insisted on the power of acting alone; but if his sincerity is left unimpeached, it is at the expense of his reputation for discernment; for the commission for restoring peace was a delusion. The ministers had provided forces amounting to about forty thousand men; sufficient, as they thought, to beat down the insurrection; and they were resolved, as masters of events, to employ their army with unrelenting firmness.

The friends of liberty in England had never been so desponding. The budget for the year included an additional duty on newspapers, which Lord North did not regard as a public benefit, but rather as "a species of luxury that ought to be taxed." Debate in the house of commons brought no result; Fox, who joined calmness of temperament to sweetness of disposition, and, as his powers unfolded themselves, gave evidence of a genial sagacity that saw beyond parliamentary strife the reality of general principles, vainly struggled to keep up the courage of his political friends. A pamphlet, written with masterly ability by Richard Price, on LIBERTY, which he defined to be a govern-

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ment of laws made by common consent, won for its author the freedom of the city of London, and was widely circulated through the kingdom, and the continent of Europe, especially Germany. His masterly plea for America was unavailing; but his tract gained peculiar importance from his applying to the actual condition of the representation of his own country, the principle on which America justified her resistance. "The time may come," said he, "when a general election in Britain will be nothing but a general auction of boroughs."

Carrying the war into the heart of English politics and society, he raised the cry for the reform in parliament which was never to be hushed, and transferred English opinion to the side of America, for the sake of that liberty which was of all things dearest to the English nation.

But what hope was there of reform in England? It was the vices of its ruling classes which prepared reform by forcing independence on America. Or how could France at that time offer liberty a home? "For my part," reasoned Chastellux, "I think there can be neither durable liberty nor happiness but for nations who have representative governments." "I think so too," remarked the octogenarian Voltaire. "The right of self-administration," said Malesherbes to Louis the Sixteenth, as he threw up his ministry, "belongs to every community; it is a natural right, the right of reason. The safest council for a king is the nation itself."

Turgot, like Malesherbes, believed in the imprescriptible right of man to the free use of his powers; and wished also that the executive chief should profit

by the counsels of the collected wisdom of the nation; but he now stood without any support in the cabinet; and his want of influence had appeared in the discussions on America. One of two things must therefore follow: Turgot must either become all prevailing and establish his system, or go into private life. Maurepas, roused by jealousy, insinuated to the right-minded king, that discontent pervaded France, and that it had Turgot alone for its object; that it was not best to wait for his resignation, for he might give as his reason for the act that he was hindered in the accomplishment of good. On the twelfth of May he was therefore dismissed, as one who was not suited to his place. For a moment the friends of the people had a beautiful and a peaceful dream; but it soon passed away, leaving the monarchy of France to sway and fall, and the people to be awakened by the example of the western world. The new minister of finance was De Clugny; a passionate and intemperate rogue, a gamester, and a debauchee, who at once conciliated support by giving out that he would do nothing disagreeable to the farmers general of the revenue. "To what masters, ye great gods, do ye give up the universe!" exclaimed Condorcet. In parting with Malesherbes, the king discarded his truest personal friend; in Turgot, French monarchy lost its firmest support, the nobility its only possible saviour; but for America the result was very different; no one was left in the cabinet who was able to restrain the government from yielding to the rising enthusiasm for America. So tangled is the web of history! The retirement of the two men who were the apostles of liberty pushed

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forward the cause of human freedom, though by irregular and disorderly movements.

In the early part of the century Leibnitz had found traces of the opinions of Epicurus and Spinoza in the books that were most in vogue, and in the men of the great world who were the masters of affairs, and he had foretold in consequence a general overturn in Europe. "The generous sentiment which prefers country and the general good to life," he said, "is dying out; public spirit is no more in fashion, and has lost the support of good morals and true religion; the ruling motive in the best is honor, and that is a principle which tolerates any thing but baseness, does not condemn shedding a deluge of blood from ambition or caprice, and might suffer a Herostatus or a Don Juan to pass for a hero; patriotism is mocked at, and the well-intentioned, who speak of what will become of posterity, are answered by saying that posterity may see to that. If this mental epidemic goes on increasing, providence will correct mankind by the revolution which it must cause."

But men had more and more given the reins to brutal passions; and throwing off the importunate fear of an overruling providence, no longer knew of any thing superior to humanity, or more godlike than themselves. "What distinguishes man," said Aristotle, "is the faculty of recognising something higher and better than himself." The eighteenth century refused to look for any thing better; the belief in the divine reason was derided like the cowering at spectres and hobgoblins; and the worship of humanity became the prevailing idolatry. Art was commissioned to gratify taste; morality had for its office to increase pleasure;

forgetting that the highest liberty consists in being forced by right reason to choose the best, men cherished sensualism as a system, and self-indulgence was the law of courts and aristocracies. A blind, unreasoning, selfish conservatism assumed that creative power was exhausted; that nature had completed her work, and that nothing was to be done but to keep things as they were; not knowing that this conception is at war with nature herself and her eternal order, men substituted for true conservatism, which looks always to the action of moral forces, the basest form of atheism and the most hopeless theory of despotic power.

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The age had ceased to wrestle with doubt, and accepted it not with anguish as the despair of reason, but with congratulation and pride. To renounce the search for eternal truth passed for wisdom; the notion that there can be no cognition of the immutable and the divine, the shallow infidelity which denies the beautiful, the true, and the good, was extolled as the perfection of enlightened reason, the highest end of intellectual striving. The agony of questioning was over; men cherished no wish for any thing beyond appearances and vain show. The prevailing philosophy in its arrogance was proud of its chains. It not only derided the infinite in man, but it jeered at the thought that man can commune with the infinite. It scoffed at all knowledge that transcends the senses, limited itself to the inferior lessons of experience, and rejected ideas which are the archetypes of things for ideas which were no more than pictures on the brain; dethroning the beautiful for the agreeable; the right for the useful; the true for the seeming; knowing nothing of a universal moral government, referring

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every thing to the self of the individual. Hume brought this philosophy of materialism to the test, and applying doubt to its lessons, laid bare its corruption. His profound and searching skepticism was the bier on which it was laid out in state; where all the world might come and see that it really was no more. But while he taught the world that it led to nothingness, he taught nothing in its stead.

It was the same in practical life. Hume might oppose the war with America, because it threatened to mortgage all the revenues of the land in England; but ever welcome at the Bourbon palace and acceptable to George the Third, he had professed to prove that tyrants should not be deposed, that the euthanasia of the British constitution would be absolutism. Skepticism puts out the eyes of inquirers, and leaves them to stumble about among tombs. It may strike down worn-out institutions into ruins, but it cannot build up a commonwealth or renovate the nations; there must be a new birth in philosophy, or all is lost in the world of reflection; in political life there is no rescue from despair but through that inborn faith in the intelligent moral and divine government of the universe, which always survives in the masses. Away, then, with the system of impotent doubt, which teaches that Europe cannot be extricated from the defilements of a selfish aristocracy or despotism, that the British constitution, though it may have a happy death, can have no reform. Let skepticism, the wandering nomad, that intrudes into every field only to desecrate and deny, strike her tents and make way for a people who have power to build up the house of humanity, because they have faith in eternal truth, and trust in

that overruling foresight which brings forth better things out of evil and out of good.

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The day on which George the Third sealed the instructions to his commissioners, congress decided to adopt no measures for their reception until previous application should be made; and voted to raise ten millions of dollars for the purpose of carrying on the war for the current year. They then took into consideration the proposition of John Adams, that "each one of the United Colonies, where no government sufficient to the exigencies of their affairs had as yet been established, should adopt such government as would, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular and of America in general." This measure he had advised twelve months before, and the timid had kept it back in order still to petition and negotiate; with full knowledge of the importance of the movement, it was now resisted through two successive days, but on the tenth of May triumphed over all procrastinators. John Adams, Edward Rutledge, and Richard Henry Lee were then appointed to prepare a preamble to the resolution. Lee and Adams were of one mind; and on the following Monday they made their report. Recalling the act of parliament which excluded the Americans from the protection of the crown, the king's neglect to return any answer whatever to their petition, the employment of the whole force of the kingdom, aided by foreign mercenaries, for their destruction, they declared that it was "absolutely irreconcilable with reason and good conscience for the people of these colonies now to take the oaths and affirma-

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tions necessary for the support of any government under the crown of Great Britain, and that it was necessary that the exercise of every kind of authority under the crown should be totally suppressed, and all the powers of government exerted under the authority of the people of the colonies, for the preservation of their peace and their defence against their enemies."

These words, of which every one bore the impress of John Adams, implied a complete separation from Britain, a total, absolute independence of the parliament, the crown, and the nation. It was also a blow dealt directly against the proprietary governments, especially that of Pennsylvania, whose members of assembly had thus far continued to take the oaths and affirmations which reason and conscience were now invoked to condemn. Duane sounded the alarm; the preamble, in his view, openly avowed independence and separation; but before changing the government of the colonies, he wished to wait for the opinions of the inhabitants, who were to be followed and not driven on. After causing the instructions from New York to be read, he showed that the powers conferred on him did not extend so far as to justify him in voting for the measure without a breach of trust; and yet, if the averments of the preamble should be confirmed, he pledged New York to independence. Sherman argued, that the adoption of the resolution was the best way to procure the harmony with Great Britain which New York desired. Mackean, who represented Delaware, thought the step must be taken, or liberty, property, and life be lost. "The first object of New York," said Samuel Adams, "is

the establishment of their rights. Our petitions are answered only by fleets, and armies, and myrmidons from abroad. The king has thrown us out of his protection; why should we support governments under his authority?" Floyd of New York was persuaded, "that it could not be long before his constituents would think it necessary to take up some more stable form of government than what they then exercised; that there were little or no hopes of commissioners coming to treat of peace; and that therefore America ought to be in a situation to preserve her liberties another way." "This preamble contains a reflection upon the conduct of some people in America," interposed Wilson, referring to the assembly of Pennsylvania, which so late as February had required oaths of allegiance of Reed and Rittenhouse. "If the preamble passes," he continued, "there will be an immediate dissolution of every kind of authority in this province; the people will be instantly in a state of nature. Before we are prepared to build the new house, why should we pull down the old one?" The delegates of Pennsylvania declined to vote on the question; those of Maryland announced, that, under their instructions, they should consider their colony as unrepresented, until they should receive the directions of their principals, who were then sitting at Annapolis.

Overruling the hesitation of the moderate men, the majority adopted the preamble, and ordered it to be published. The measure proved "a piece of mechanism to work out independence." "The Gordian knot," said John Adams, "is cut;" and as he meditated in solitude upon the lead which he had assumed in summoning so many populous and opulent colonies to rise

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from the state of subjection into that of independent republics, the great events which were rapidly advancing elevated him above the weaknesses of human passions, and filled his mind with awe. Many of those who were to take part in framing constitutions for future millions, turned to him for advice. He recalled the first principles of political morals, the lessons inculcated by American experience, and the example of England. Familiar with the wise and eloquent writings of those of her sons who had treated of liberty, and combining with them the results of his own reflections, he did not shrink from offering his advice. He declared the only moral foundation of government to be the consent of the people; yet he counselled respect for existing rules, and to avoid opening a fruitful source of controversy, he refused to promote for the present any alteration, at least in Massachusetts, in the qualifications of voters. "There is no good government," he said, "but what is republican; for a republic is an empire of laws and not of men;" and to constitute the best of republics, he enforced the necessity of separating the executive, legislative, and judicial powers. The ill use which the royal governors had made of the veto power did not confuse his judgment; he upheld the principle that the chief executive magistrate ought to be invested with a negative upon the legislature. To the judges he wished to assign commissions during good behavior; and to establish their salaries by law; but to make them liable to impeachment and removal by the grand inquest of the colony.

The republics of the ancient world had grown out of cities, so that their governments were originally

municipalities; to make a republic possible in the large territories embraced in the several American colonies, where the whole society could never be assembled, power was to be deputed by the many to a few, who were to be elected by suffrage, and were in theory to be a faithful miniature portrait of the people. Nor yet should all power be intrusted to one representative assembly. The advocates of a perfect unity in government favored the concentration of power in one body, for the sake of an unobstructed exercise of the popular will; but John Adams taught, what an analysis of the human mind and the examples of history through thousands of years unite to confirm, that a single assembly is liable to the frailties of a single individual; to passionate caprices, and to a selfish eagerness for the increase of its own importance. "If the legislative power," such were his words just as the American constitutions were forming, "if the legislative power is wholly in one assembly, and the executive in another, or in a single person, these two powers will oppose and encroach upon each other, until the contest shall end in war, and the whole power, legislative and executive, be usurped by the strongest."

These are words to be inscribed on the memory and hearts of every convention that would constitute a republic; yet at that time there was not one member of the continental congress who applied the principle to the continental congress itself. Hawley of Northampton had advised an American parliament with two houses of legislature; but John Adams saw no occasion for any continental constitution except a congress which should contain a fair representation of the colonies, and confine its authority sacredly to war,

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CHAP. trade, disputes between colony and colony, the post-
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1776. In the separate colonies, he urged that all the
May. youth should be liberally educated, and all men be required to keep arms and to be trained to their use. A country having a constitution founded on these principles, diffusing knowledge among the people, and inspiring them with the conscious dignity becoming freemen, would, "when compared with the regions of monarchical or aristocratical domination, seem an Arcadia or an Elysium."

During these discussions, James Mugford, a Marblehead sea-captain, in a continental cruiser of but fifty tons and four guns, captured, and brought into Boston harbor, the British ship "Hope," which had on board fifteen hundred barrels of powder. This cargo made her the most valuable prize that had been taken. Two days later, on the nineteenth of May, the gallant officer prepared to go out again. At Nantasket he was attacked by thirteen boats from a British man-of-war; they were beaten off with great loss, while none of the Americans was hurt except Mugford, who fought heroically, and was mortally wounded.

CHAPTER LXIV.

VIRGINIA PROCLAIMS THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

MAY, JUNE, 1776.

ON the sixth day of May, forty-five members of the house of burgesses of Virginia met at the capitol in Williamsburg pursuant to their adjournment; but as they were of the opinion that the ancient constitution had been subverted by the king and parliament of Great Britain, they dissolved themselves unanimously, and thus the last vestige of the king's authority passed away.

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The delegates of Virginia, who on the same morning assembled in convention, were a constituent and an executive assembly. They represented the oldest and the largest colony, whose institutions had been fashioned on the model recommended by Bacon, and whose inhabitants for nearly a hundred and seventy years had been eminently loyal, and had sustained the church of England as the establishment of the land.

Its people, having in their origin a perceptible but never an exclusive influence of the cavaliers, had sprung

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mainly from adventurers, who were not fugitives for conscience' sake, or sufferers from persecution, or passionate partisans of monarchy. The population had been recruited by successive infusions of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians; Huguenots, and the descendants of Huguenots; men who had been so attached to Cromwell or to the republic, that they preferred to emigrate on the return of Charles the Second; Baptists, and other dissenters; and in the valley of Virginia there was already a very large German population. Beside all these, there was the great body of the backwoodsmen, rovers from Maryland and Pennsylvania, not caring much for the record of their lineage.

The territory for which the convention was to act was not a limited one like that of Sparta or Attica: beginning at the ocean, it comprised the great bay of the Chesapeake, with its central and southern tributaries; the beautiful valleys on the head springs of the Roanoke and along the whole course of the Shenandoah; the country beyond the mountains, including the sources of the Monongahela and the Cumberland rivers, and extending indefinitely to the Tennessee and beyond it. Nor that only: Virginia insisted that its jurisdiction stretched without bounds over all the country west and northwest of a line two hundred miles north of Old Point Comfort, not granted to others by royal charters; and there was no one to dispute a large part of this claim except the province of Quebec under an act of parliament which the continental congress had annulled. For all this wide region, rich in soil, precious minerals, healing springs, forests, convenient marts for foreign commerce, the great pathways to the west, more fertile, more spa-

cious than all Greece, Italy, and Great Britain, than any region for which it had ever been proposed to establish republican liberty, a constitution was to be framed.

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It has been discussed, whether the spirit that now prevailed was derived from cavaliers, and whether it sprung from the inhabitants on tide water or was due to those of the uplands; the answer is plain: the movement in Virginia proceeded from the heart of Virginia herself, and represented the magnanimity of her own people. It did not spring, it could not spring, from sentiments generated by the by-gone loyalty to the Stuarts. The Ancient Dominion had with entire unanimity approved the revolution of 1688; with equal unanimity, had, even more readily than the English, accepted the house of Hanover, and had been one of the most loyal parts of the empire of the Georges; the revolution was due to a keen sentiment of wrong and outrage, and was joined in with a oneness of spirit, which asked no questions about ancestry, or traditional affinities, or religious creed, or nearness to the sea or to the mountains. The story of the war commemorates the courage of the highlanders; among the "inexorable families," Dunmore especially reported from the low country the family of the Lees, and the whole family of Cary of Hampton, of whom even the sisters, married to a Fairfax and a Nicholas, cheered on their connections to unrelenting opposition. Virginia rose with as much unanimity as Connecticut or Massachusetts, and with a more commanding resolution.

The purpose for which the convention was assembled, appears from the words of the county of Buck-

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ingham to Charles Patterson and John Cabell, its delegates: "We instruct you to cause a total and final separation from Great Britain to take place as soon as possible; and a constitution to be established, with a full representation, and free and frequent elections. As America is the last country of the world which has contended for her liberty, so she may be the most free and happy; taking advantage of her situation and strength, and having the experience of all before to profit by. The supreme Being hath left it in our power to choose what government we please for our civil and religious happiness: good government and the prosperity of mankind can alone be in the divine intention; we pray, therefore, that under the superintending providence of the Ruler of the universe, a government may be established in America, the most free, happy, and permanent that human wisdom can contrive, and the perfection of man maintain."

The county of Augusta represented the necessity of making the confederacy of the United Colonies, most perfect, independent, and lasting; and of framing an equal, free, and liberal government, that might bear the test of all future ages. A petition was also sent from the inhabitants of Transylvania, declaring that they were anxious to concur with their brethren of the United Colonies in every measure for the recovery of their rights and liberties.

The inhabitants on the rivers Watauga and Holstein set forth, that "they were deeply impressed with a sense of the distresses of their American brethren, and would, when called upon, with their lives and fortunes, lend them every assistance in their power; that they begged to be considered as a part of the

colony, and would readily embrace every opportunity of obeying any commands from the convention.”

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To that body were chosen more than one hundred and thirty of the ablest and most weighty men of Virginia. Among them were no rash enthusiasts for liberty; no lovers of revolution for the sake of change; no ambitious demagogues hoping for advancement by the overthrow of existing institutions; they were the choice of the freeholders of Virginia, and the majority were men of independent fortune, or even opulence. It was afterwards remembered, that of this grave assembly the members were for the most part men of large stature and robust frames, and that a very great proportion of them lived to exceeding old age. They were now to decide whether Virginia demanded independence, and if so, they were to establish a commonwealth; and in making this decision they moved like a pillar of fire in front of the whole country.

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When the delegates had assembled and appointed a clerk, Richard Bland recommended Edmund Pendleton to be chosen president, and was seconded by Archibald Cary; while Thomas Johnson of Louisa, and Bartholomew Dandridge, proposed Thomas Ludwell Lee. For a moment there was something like an array of parties, but it instantly subsided; Virginia showed her greatness by her moderation, and gave to the world new evidence that the revolution sprung from necessity, by placing in the chair Pendleton, the most cautious and conservative among the patriots.

The convention, after having been employed for some days on current business, resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the state of the colony;

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and on the fifteenth Archibald Cary reported resolutions which had been drafted by Pendleton, offered by Nelson, and enforced by Henry. They were then twice read at the clerk's table, and, one hundred and twelve members being present, were unanimously agreed to. The preamble enumerated their chief grievances, among others, that the king's representative in the colony was training and employing slaves against their masters; and they say: "We have no alternative left but an abject submission or a total separation;" therefore they went on to decree, "that their delegates in congress be instructed to propose to that body to declare the United Colonies free and independent states, absolved from all allegiance or dependence upon the crown or parliament of Great Britain; and that they give the assent of this colony to such declaration, and to measures for forming foreign alliances, and a confederation of the colonies: provided that the power of forming government for, and the regulation of the internal concerns of, each colony, be left to the respective colonial legislatures."

This resolution was received out of doors with chimes of bells and the noise of artillery; and the British flag, which had thus far kept its place on the state-house, was struck, to be raised no more.

In the following days a committee of thirty two was appointed to prepare a declaration of rights and a plan of government. Among the members were Archibald Cary, Patrick Henry, the aged Richard Bland, Edmund Randolph, son of the attorney general, who was then a refugee in England, Nicholas, James Madison, the youthful delegate from Orange county; but the man of most influence at this great

moment was George Mason, the successor of Washington in the representation of Fairfax county. He was a devoted member of the church of England; and by his own account of himself, which is still preserved, "though not born within the verge of the British isle, he had been an Englishman in his principles, a zealous assertor of the act of settlement, firmly attached to the royal family upon the throne, well affected to the king personally and to his government, in defence of which he would have shed the last drop of his blood; one who adored the wisdom and happiness of the British constitution, and preferred it to any that then existed or had ever existed." For ten years he claimed nothing for his countrymen beyond the liberty and privileges of Englishmen, in the same degree as if they had still continued among their brethren in Great Britain; but he said: "The ancient poets, in their elegant manner of expression, have made a kind of being of Necessity, and tell us that the gods themselves are obliged to yield to her;" and he left the private life that he loved, to assist in the rescue of his country from the excesses of arbitrary power to which a seeming fatality had driven the British ministers. He was a good speaker and an able debater, the more eloquent now for being touched with sorrow; but his great strength lay in his sincerity, which made him wise and bold, modest and unchanging, while it overawed his hearers. He was severe, but his severity was humane, with no tinge of bitterness, though he had a scorn for every thing mean, and cowardly, and low; and he always spoke out his convictions with frank directness. He had been truly loyal; on renouncing his king, he could stand justified to his

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own conscience only by the purest and most unselfish attachment to human freedom.

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On the twenty seventh of May, Cary from the committee presented to the convention the declaration of rights, which Mason had drafted. For the next fortnight the great truths which it proclaimed, and which were to form the groundwork of American institutions, employed the thoughts of the convention, and during several successive days were the subject of solemn deliberation. One clause only received a material amendment. Mason had written that all should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion. But toleration is the demand of the skeptic, who has no fixed belief, and only wishes to be let alone; a firm faith, which is too easily tempted to establish itself exclusively, can be content with nothing less than equality. A young man, then unknown to fame, of a bright hazel eye inclining to gray, small in stature, light in person, delicate in appearance, looking like a pallid, sickly scholar among the robust men with whom he was associated, proposed a change. He was James Madison, the son of an Orange county planter, bred in the school of Presbyterian dissenters under Witherspoon at Princeton, trained by his own studies, by meditative rural life in the Old Dominion, by an ingenuous indignation at the persecutions of the Baptists, by the innate principles of right, to uphold the sanctity of religious freedom. He objected to the word toleration, because it implied an established religion, which endured dissent only as a condescension; and as the earnestness of his convictions overcame his modesty, he went on to demonstrate that "all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of

religion, according to the dictates of conscience." His motion, which did but state with better dialectics the very purpose which Mason wished to accomplish, obtained the suffrages of his colleagues. This was the first achievement of the wisest civilian of Virginia. The declaration of rights having then been fairly transcribed, was on the twelfth of June read a third time, and unanimously adopted by the representatives of the good people of Virginia, assembled in full and free convention.

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These are the rights which they said do pertain to them and their posterity, as the basis and foundation of government: "All men are by nature equally free, and have inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

"All power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the people; magistrates are their trustees and servants, and at all times amenable to them.

"Government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit and security of the people, nation, or community; and whenever any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish it, in such a manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal.

"Public services not being descendible, neither ought the offices of magistrate, legislator, or judge to be hereditary.

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"The legislative and executive powers of the state should be separate and distinct from the judicative; the members of the two first should, at fixed periods, return into that body from which they were originally taken, and the vacancies be supplied by frequent, certain, and regular elections.

"Elections of members to serve as representatives of the people in assembly, ought to be free; and all men, having sufficient evidence of permanent common interest with, and attachment to, the community, have the right of suffrage, and cannot be taxed or deprived of their property for public uses without their own consent or that of their representative so elected, nor bound by any law to which they have not, in like manner, assented for the public good.

"There ought to be no arbitrary power of suspending laws, no requirement of excessive bail, no granting of general warrants.

"No man ought to be deprived of liberty, except by the law of the land or the judgment of his peers; and the ancient trial by jury ought to be held sacred.

"The freedom of the press is one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained but by despotic governments.

"A well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defence of a free state; standing armies in time of peace should be avoided as dangerous to liberty; and in all cases the military should be under strict subordination to the civil power.

"The people have a right to uniform government; and therefore no government separate from or inde-

pendent of the government of Virginia, ought to be erected or established within the limits thereof.

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“No free government can be preserved but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue, and by frequent recurrence to fundamental principles.

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“Religion can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of it, according to the dictates of conscience; and it is the mutual duty of all to practise Christian forbearance, love, and charity, towards each other.”

Other colonies had framed bills of rights in reference to their relations with Britain: Virginia moved from charters and customs to primal principles; from a narrow altercation with lawyers about facts to the contemplation of immutable truth. She summoned the eternal laws of man's being to protest against all tyranny. The English petition of right in 1688 was historic and retrospective; the Virginia declaration came directly out of the heart of nature, and announced governing principles for all peoples in all future times. It was the voice of reason going forth to create new institutions, to speak a new political world into being. Virginia presented herself at the bar of the world, and gave the name and fame of her sons as hostages that her public life should show a likeness to the highest ideas of right and equal freedom among men.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE VIRGINIA PROPOSITION OF INDEPENDENCE.

MAY, JUNE, 1776.

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WHILE Virginia communicated to her sister colonies her instruction to her delegates in congress to propose independence, Washington at New York freely and repeatedly delivered his opinion: "A reconciliation with Great Britain is impracticable, and would be in the highest degree detrimental to the true interest of America; when I first took the command of the army, I abhorred the idea of independence; but I am now fully convinced that nothing else will save us." The preamble and the resolve of congress, adopted at Philadelphia on the same day with the Virginia instructions at Williamsburg, were in themselves the act of a self-determining political body. The blow which proceeded from John Adams, felled the proprietary authority in Pennsylvania and Maryland to the ground. Maryland, more happy than her neighbor, kept her ranks unbroken, for she had intrusted the direction of the revolution to a convention

whose decrees were received as indisputably the voice of her whole people. She had dispensed with oaths for the support of the government under the crown; but she resolved that it was not necessary to suppress totally the exercise of every kind of office derived from the king; and in her new instructions to her delegates in congress she mixed with her pledges of support to the common cause the lingering wish for a reunion with Great Britain. Meanwhile, the governor was required to leave the province; and the only powers actually in being were the deputies in congress, the council of safety, and the convention.

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In Pennsylvania, the preamble, which was published on the morning of the sixteenth, was cited by the popular party as a dissolution of the proprietary government, and a direction to institute a new one under the authority of the people. On the next day, which was kept as a national fast, George Duffield, the minister of the third Presbyterian church in Philadelphia, with John Adams for a listener, drew a parallel between George the Third and Pharaoh, and inferred that the same providence of God which had rescued the Israelites, intended to free the Americans. On the twenty fourth, a town meeting of more than four thousand men was held in the state-house yard, to confront the instructions of the assembly against independence with the vote of the continental congress against "oaths of allegiance and the exercise of any kind of authority under the crown." It was called to order by John Bayard, the chairman of the committee of inspection for the county of Philadelphia, a patriot of singular purity of character and disinterestedness, personally brave, pensive, earnest, and

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LXV. deau; and it voted unanimously, that the instructions
1776. withdrew the province from the happy union with
May. the other colonies; that the present assembly was not
elected for the purpose of forming a new government;
and, with but one dissentient voice, it further voted,
that the house of assembly, not having the authority
of the people for that purpose, could not, without
usurpation, proceed to form a new government. As a
consequence, the committee of the city and liberties
of Philadelphia was directed to summon a conference
of the committees of every county in the province,
to make arrangements for a constituent convention,
which should be chosen by the people.

Thus was prepared the fall of the proprietary charter of Pennsylvania. Any agreement which the governor would accept could be no better than a collusion, for by the very nature of his office and his interests he could not stand out against the British ministry, however much they might be in the wrong. The members of the assembly, by taking the oath or affirmation of allegiance, had plainly incapacitated themselves for reforming the government. Besides, the resolve in congress, which dispensed in all cases with that oath, was interpreted as conferring the rights of electors on the Germans who had not yet been naturalized; so that the assembly appeared now to represent not the people, but a wrongfully limited governing class.

It was unhappy for the colony that Dickinson and his friends refused to place themselves at the head of the popular movement for a convention; for it left the principle of independence in Pennsylvania to be

established by a domestic political party, springing spontaneously from the ranks of the people, and struggling against an active social influence, a numerous religious organization, and the traditional governing classes.

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The assembly stood adjourned to the twentieth; on the morning of the twenty second a quorum appeared, and as a first concession to the continental congress, the newly elected members were not required to swear allegiance to the king. The protest of the inhabitants of the city and liberties against their powers to carry the resolve of congress into execution, was presented, read, and laid on the table; but no other notice was taken of it. The resolve itself was got out of the way by the appointment of a committee to ask of the continental congress an explanation of its purpose. The proposal to sanction the naturalization of foreigners without requiring oaths of allegiance to the king, was, in like manner, put to sleep by a reference to a committee, composed of those who had most earnestly contested the wishes of the Germans. The assembly seemed to have no purpose, unless to gain time and wait. The constitution was the watchword of the conservative members, union that of the revolutionists; one party represented old established interests, another saw no hope but from independence and a firm confederation; between these two stood Dickinson, whose central position was the hiding place of the irresolute.

On the twenty third, an address, claiming to proceed from the committee of inspection for the county of Philadelphia, and bearing the name of William Hamilton as chairman, asked the assembly to "adhere

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religiously to its instructions against independence, and to oppose altering the least part of their invaluable constitution." The next day the committee of inspection of the city of Philadelphia came together with Mackean as chairman, and addressed a memorial directly to the continental congress, setting forth, that the assembly did not possess the confidence of the people, nor truly represent the province; that among its members were men who held offices under the crown of Great Britain, and who had been dragged into compliance with most of the recommendations of congress only from the fear of being superseded by a convention; that measures for assembling a convention of the people had now been taken by men whose constituents were fighting men, and were determined to support the union of the province with the other colonies at every hazard.

June

The members of the assembly became uneasy: in the first days of June no quorum appeared; on the fifth the proceedings of Virginia, directing her delegates to propose independence, were read in the house. No answer was returned; but a petition from Cumberland county, asking that the instructions to the delegates of Pennsylvania might be withdrawn, was read a second time, and a committee of seven was appointed to bring in new instructions. Of its members, among whom were Dickinson, Morris, Reed, Clymer, and one or two loyalists, all but Clymer were, for the present, opposed to independence.

The instructions of Pennsylvania which they reported on the sixth, conceded that the revolutionists were in the right; "that all honest men

theless, with a full knowledge that the king would not yield, they expressed their ardent desire for an end of the civil war; while they expressly sanctioned a confederation, and "treaties with foreign kingdoms and states," they neither advised nor forbade a declaration of independence, trusting to "the ability, prudence, and integrity" of their delegates. Now the opinion of the majority of those delegates was notorious; but to remove even a possibility of uncertainty, on the seventh of June; before the question on the new instructions was taken, Dickinson, in the assembly, made a speech, in which he pledged his word to Allen, who was the proprietary chief-justice of the province, and to the whole house, that he and the majority of the delegates would continue to vote against independence.

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On that same day, and perhaps while Dickinson was speaking in the Pennsylvania assembly, Richard Henry Lee, in the name and with the authority of Virginia, proposed in congress: "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; that it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign alliances; and that a plan of confederation be prepared, and transmitted to the respective colonies for their consideration and approbation." The resolutions were seconded by John Adams; and "the members were enjoined to attend punctually the next day at ten o'clock, in order to take them into their consideration."

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At nine in the morning of the eighth of June, the assembly of Pennsylvania resumed the consideration of its new instructions, and adopted them by a vote of thirty one against twelve. The disingenuous measure proved the end of that body; once only did it again bring together a quorum of its members. The moderate and the timid, lending their aid to the proprietary party, had put themselves in the wrong both theoretically and practically; at once conceding the impossibility of reconciliation, and, by their indecision, entailing on Pennsylvania years of distraction and bitter strife.

At ten on the same day congress entered into the consideration of Richard Henry Lee's resolve, and the long debate which ensued was the most copious and the most animated ever held on the subject. The argument on the part of its opponents was sustained by Robert Livingston of New York, by Wilson, Dickinson, and Edward Rutledge. They made no objection to a confederacy, and to sending a project of a treaty by proper persons to France; but they contended that a declaration of independence would place America in the power of the British, with whom she was to negotiate; give her enemy notice to counteract her intentions before she had taken steps to carry them into execution; and expose her to ridicule in the eyes of foreign powers by prematurely attempting to bring them into an alliance. Edward Rutledge said privately, "that it required the impudence of a New Englander, for them in their disjointed state to propose a treaty to a nation now at peace; that no reason could be assigned for pressing into this measure but the reason of every madman, a show of spirit." Wilson avowed

that the removal of the restriction on his vote by the Pennsylvania assembly on that morning, did not change his view of his obligation to resist independence. On the other hand, John Adams defended the proposed measures as "objects of the most stupendous magnitude, in which the lives and liberties of millions yet unborn were intimately interested;" as the consummation "of a revolution, the most complete, unexpected, and remarkable, of any in the history of nations." The power of all New England, Virginia, and Georgia was put forth on the same side; and the discussion was kept up till seven in the evening. A majority of the colonies, including North Carolina, appeared to be unalterably fixed in favor of an immediate declaration of independence; but the vote on the question was postponed till Monday. *

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On the day of rest which intervened, Keith, the British minister at the court of Vienna, obtained an audience of Joseph the Second, and afterwards of the empress Maria Theresa. The emperor referred to the proclamation which the joint sovereigns had issued, most strictly prohibiting all commerce between their subjects in the Low Countries and the rebel colonies in America, and went on to say: "I am very sorry for the difficulties which have arisen to distress the king's government; the cause in which he is engaged, is in fact the cause of all sovereigns, for they have a joint interest in the maintenance of a just subordination and obedience to law, in all the monarchies which surround them; I see with pleasure the vigorous exertions of the national strength, which he is now employing to bring his rebellious subjects to a speedy submission, and I most sincerely wish success to those

CHAP. measures." The empress queen, in her turn, expressed
LXV. a very hearty desire to see obedience and tranquillity
1776. restored to every quarter of the British dominions.
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When the congress met on Monday, Edward Rutledge, without much expectation of success, moved that the question should be postponed three weeks, while in the mean time the plan of a confederation and of treaties might be matured. The whole day until seven in the evening was consumed in the discussion. The desire of attaining a perfect unanimity, and the reasonableness of allowing time for the delegates of the central colonies to consult their constituents, induced seven colonies against five to assent to the delay, but with the further condition, that, to prevent any loss of time, a committee should in the mean while prepare a declaration in harmony with the proposed resolution. On the next day, Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston were chosen by ballot to prepare the declaration; and it fell to Jefferson to write it, both because he represented Virginia, from which the proposition had gone forth, and because he had been elected by the largest number of votes.

On the twelfth, the office of digesting the form of a confederation to be entered into between the colonies, was referred to a committee of one member from each colony; and as if the subject had not been of transcendent importance, the appointment of the committee was left to the presiding officer. Among those whom Hancock selected are found the names of Samuel Adams, Dickinson, and Edward Rutledge; it could have been wished that the two Adamses had changed places, though probably the result would at

that time have been the same; no one man had done so much to bring about independence as the elder Adams, but his skill in constructing governments, not his knowledge of the principles of freedom, was less remarkable than that of his younger kinsman. In the committee, Dickinson, who, as an opponent of independence, could promote only a temporary constitution, assumed the task of drafting the great charter of union.

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The preparation of a plan of treaties with foreign powers, was intrusted by ballot to Dickinson, Franklin, John Adams, Harrison, and Robert Morris; and between John Adams and Dickinson there was no difference of opinion, that the scheme to be proposed should be confined to commerce, without any grant of exclusive privileges, and without any entanglement of a political connection or alliance.

On the fourteenth, a board of war, of which Washington had explained the extreme necessity, was appointed, and John Adams was placed at its head.

Congress acted like an independent power. On the twenty fourth, it "resolved, that all persons abiding within any of the United Colonies, and deriving protection from its laws, owe allegiance to the said laws, and are members of such colony;" and it charged the guilt of treason upon "all members of any of the United Colonies, who should be adherent to the king of Great Britain, giving to him aid and comfort."

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE BATTLE OF FORT MOULTRIE.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH OF JUNE, 1776.

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THE month of May robed the pomegranate and the oleander in their gorgeous masses of flowers, and the peace of Charleston was still undisturbed except by gathering rumors, that the English fleet and transports destined for its attack had arrived in Cape Fear River. Its citizens, taking courage from the efficiency and wisdom with which the independent government of the colony was administered, toiled continually in the trenches, and bands of negroes from the neighboring plantations were put upon the works. The bloom of the magnolia was yellowing in the hot sky of early summer, when, on the first day of June, expresses from Christ Church parish brought news to the president, that a fleet of forty or fifty sail lay anchored about twenty miles to the north of Charleston bar.

Prompt and fearless in action, Rutledge ordered the alarm to be fired; and while the townsmen were looking out for horses, carriages, or boats to remove

their wives and children, he hastened down the militia from the country by expresses, and in company with Armstrong visited all the fortifications. Barricades were thrown up across the principal streets; defences were raised at the points most likely to be selected for landing; lead, gleaned from the weights of church and dwelling-house windows, was cast into musket balls; and a respectable force in men was concentrated at the capitol.

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The invaders of South Carolina, at a moment when instant action was essential to their success, were perplexed by uncertainty of counsel between Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, the respective commanders of the army and the naval force. On the seventh, when Clinton would have sent on shore a proclamation by a flag of truce, his boat was fired upon by an ignorant sentinel; but the next day Moultrie cleared up the mistake through one of his officers, and received the proclamation in return. In this the British general declared the existence of "a most unprovoked and wicked rebellion within South Carolina," the "succession of crimes of its inhabitants," the tyranny of its congress and committees, the error, thus far incorrigible, of an "infatuated and misguided multitude," the duty of "proceeding forthwith against all bodies of men in arms, congresses, and committees, as open enemies of the state;" but "from humanity" he consented "to forewarn the deluded people," and to offer in his majesty's name "free pardon to such as should lay down their arms and submit to the laws." Having done this, he consulted Cornwallis on the best means of gaining possession of Sullivan's Island; and both agreed that they could not more effectually co-

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operate with the intended movement of the fleet, than by landing on Long Island, which was represented to communicate with Sullivan's Island at low water by a ford, and with the main by a channel navigable for boats of draft. Clinton had had four days' time to sound the ford; but he took the story of its depth on trust.

On the morning of the ninth of June, Charles Lee, attended by his aides-de-camp, and by Robert Howe of North Carolina, arrived at Haddrell's Point. After examining its fortifications, he crossed over to Sullivan's Island, where he found a good stock of powder; a fort, of which the front and one side were finished; and twelve hundred men encamped in its rear in booths that were roofed with palmetto leaves. Within the fort, numerous mechanics and laborers were lifting and fitting heavy palmetto logs for its walls. He had scarce glanced at the work, when he declared that "he did not like that post at all; it could not hold out half an hour, and there was no way to retreat;" it was but a "slaughter pen," and the garrison would be sacrificed. On his way up to Charleston, Lee touched at James Island, where Gadsden had the command.

The battalions raised in South Carolina were not as yet placed upon the continental establishment; and although congress bore the proportionate expense, the disposition of the force still remained under the exclusive direction of the president of the colony and its officers. This circumstance became now of the greatest importance. To Armstrong no command whatever had been conceded: but Lee was the second officer in the American army; his military fame was

at that time very great; he had power from the general congress to order, and he had ordered, battalions from North Carolina and Virginia; his presence was a constant pledge of the active sympathy of the continent; and on his arrival he was invested with the military command through an order from Rutledge.

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On that same day Clinton began his disembarkation, landing four or five hundred men on Long Island. It was therefore evident that the first attack was to be made not on the city but its out-post; yet Lee proposed to Rutledge to withdraw from Sullivan's Island, and abandon it without a blow. Had he acted in concert with the invaders, he could not have more completely promoted their design. But Rutledge, interposing his authority, would not suffer it, and Lee did not venture to proceed alone; yet on the tenth his very first order to Moultrie, except one which was revoked as soon as issued, directed that officer to construct bridges for his retreat, and the order was repeated and enforced several times that day, and on almost every succeeding one. Happily Moultrie's courage was of that placid kind that could not be made anxious or uneasy; he weighed carefully his danger and his resources; with quiet, imperturbable confidence, formed his plan for repelling the impending double attack of the enemy by sea and by land; and never so much as imagined that he could be driven from his post.

On the tenth, while the continental congress was finishing the debate on independence, the Bristol, whose guns had been previously taken out, came over the bar, attended by thirty or forty vessels,

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and anchored at about three miles from Fort Sullivan. In Charleston, from which this movement was distinctly visible, all was action; on the wharfs, warehouses of great value were thrown down to give room for the fire of cannon and musketry from the lines along East Bay; intrenchments surrounded the town; the barricades, raised in the principal streets, were continued to the water; and arrow-headed embankments were projected upon the landing places. Negroes from the country took part in the labor; the hoe and the spade were in every citizen's hands; for all persons, without distinction, "labored with alacrity," some for the sake of example, some as the best way of being useful. Neither the noonday sun, nor gushes of rain, interrupted their toil.

On the eleventh, the two regiments from North Carolina arrived. That same day, Lee, being told that a bridge of retreat from Sullivan's Island to Hadrell's Point was impossible, and not being permitted by Rutledge to direct the total evacuation of the island, ordered Moultrie immediately to send four hundred of his men over to the continent; in his postscript he added: "Make up the detachment to five hundred." On the thirteenth he writes: "You will detach another hundred of men," to strengthen the corps on the other side of the creek. But the spirit of South Carolina had sympathy with Moultrie, and mechanics and negro laborers were sent down to complete his fort; yet hard as they toiled, it was not nearly finished before the action. On the twelfth the wind blew so violently that two ships which lay

outside of the bar were obliged for safety to stand out to sea, and this assisted to postpone the attack.

On the fifteenth, Lee stationed Armstrong at Hadrell's Point; and the brave Pennsylvanian, as the superior officer, ever manifested for Moultrie a hearty friendship. On that same day, Sir Peter Parker gave to the captains of his squadron his arrangement for taking the batteries on Sullivan's Island; and on the sixteenth he communicated it to Clinton, who did not know what to do. The dilatory conduct of the British betrayed hesitation and unharmonious councils; and the Carolinians made such use of the consequent delay, that by the seventeenth they were in an exceedingly good state of preparation at every outpost and also in town. But Clinton intended only to occupy and garrison Sullivan's Island. For that end, consulting with Cornwallis, he completed the landing of all his men on Long Island, a naked sand, where nothing grew except a few bushes, that harbored myriads of mosquitoes, and where the troops suffered intensely from the burning sun, the want of good water, and the bad quality and insufficient supply of provisions. A trial of the ford was made; Clinton himself waded in up to his neck; so did others of his officers; and on the day on which he succeeded in getting all his men on shore, he announced through Vaughan to Sir Peter Parker, that no ford was to be found; that there remained a depth of seven feet of water at low tide; and that therefore the troops could not take the share they expected in the intended attack. His six full regiments, and companies enough from others to make up one more, a body of more than three thousand men, thoroughly provided with

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arms, artillery, and ammunition, had left the transports for a naked sand-bank, that was to them a prison. Compelled to propose something, Clinton fixed on the twenty third for the joint attack; but it was hindered on that day by an unfavorable wind.

In the following night, Muhlenberg's regiment arrived. On receiving Lee's orders they had instantly set off from Virginia and marched to Charleston, without tents, continually exposed to the weather. The companies were composed chiefly of Muhlenberg's old German parishioners; and of all the Virginia regiments, this was the most complete, the best armed, best clothed, and best equipped for immediate service. The Americans were now very strong.

The confidence of Sir Peter Parker in an easy victory was unshaken. To make all sure, he exercised a body of marines and seamen in the art of entering forts through embrasures; intending first to silence Moultrie's battery, then to land his practised detachment, and by their aid enter the fort. His presumption was justified by the judgment of Lee. That general, coming down to the island, took Moultrie aside and said: "Do you think you can maintain this post?" Moultrie answered: "Yes, I think I can." But Lee had no faith in a spirited defence, fretted at Moultrie's too easy disposition, and wished, up to the last moment, to remove him from the command.

On the twenty fifth the squadron was increased by the arrival of the "Experiment," a ship of sixty guns, which passed the bar on the twenty sixth. Letters of encouragement came also from Tonym, then governor of East Florida, who was impatient for an attack on Georgia; he would have had a body of

Indians raised on the back of South Carolina, and a body of royalists to "terrify and distract, so that the assault at Charleston would have struck an astonishing terror and affright." He reported South Carolina to be in "a mutinous state that delighted him;" "the men would certainly rise on their officers; the battery on Sullivan's Island would not discharge two rounds." This opinion was spread through the fleet, and became the belief of every sailor on board. With or without Clinton's aid the commodore was persuaded that his well drilled seamen and marines could take and keep possession of the fort, till Clinton should "send as many troops as he might think proper, who might enter the fort in the same way."

One day, Captain Lempriere, the same who in the former year had, with daring enterprise, taken more than a hundred barrels of powder from a vessel at anchor off St. Augustine, was walking with Moultrie on the platform, and, looking at the British ships-of-war, all of which had already come over the bar, addressed him: "Well, Colonel, what do you think of it now?" "We shall beat them," said Moultrie. "The men-of-war," rejoined the captain, "will knock your fort down in half an hour." "Then," said Moultrie, "we will lie behind the ruins, and prevent their men from landing."

On the morning of the twenty eighth a gentle sea-breeze prognosticated the attack. Lee, from Charleston, for the tenth or eleventh time, charged Moultrie to finish the bridge for his retreat, promised him reënforcements, which were never sent, and still meditated removing him from his command; while Moultrie, whose faculties, under the outward show

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LXVI. to their utmost tension, rode to visit his advanced
1776. guard on the east. Here the commander, William
June Thomson, of Orangeburg, of Irish descent, a native
28. of Pennsylvania, but from childhood a citizen of South
Carolina, a man of rare worth in private life, brave
and intelligent as an officer, had, at the extreme
point, posted fifty of the militia, behind sand-hills
and myrtle bushes. A few hundred yards in the
rear, breastworks had been thrown up, which he
guarded with three hundred riflemen of his own
regiment from Orangeburg and its neighborhood,
with two hundred of Clark's North Carolina regi-
ment, two hundred more of the men of South Caro-
lina under Horry, and the raccoon company of
riflemen. On his left he was protected by a morass;
on his right by one eighteen pounder and one brass
six pounder, which overlooked the spot where Clinton
would wish to land.

Seeing the enemy's boats already in motion on the
beach of Long Island, and the men-of-war loosing their
topsails, Moultrie hurried back to his fort at full
speed. He ordered the long roll to beat, and officers
and men to their posts. His whole number, including
himself and officers, was four hundred and thirty five;
of whom twenty two were of the artillery, the rest of
his own regiment; men who were bound to each other,
to their officers, and to him, by personal affection and
confidence. Next to him in command was Isaac Motte;
his major was the fearless and faultless Francis Marion.
The fort was a square, with a bastion at each angle;
built of palmetto logs, dove-tailed and bolted together,
and laid in parallel rows sixteen feet asunder, with

sand filled in between the rows. On the eastern and northern sides the palmetto wall was only seven feet high, but it was surmounted by thick plank, so as to be tenable against a scaling party; a traverse of sand extended from east to west. The southern and western curtains were finished with their platforms, on which cannon were mounted. The standard, which was advanced to the south-east bastion, displayed a flag of blue with a white crescent, on which was emblazoned LIBERTY. The whole number of cannon in the fort, the bastions, and the two cavaliers, was but thirty one, of which no more than twenty one could at the same time be brought into use; of ammunition there were but twenty eight rounds for twenty six cannon. At Haddrell's Point, across the bay, Armstrong had about fifteen hundred men. The first regular South Carolina regiment, under Christopher Gadsden, occupied Fort Johnson, which stood on the most northerly part of James Island, about three miles from Charleston, and within point-blank shot of the channel. Charleston was protected by more than two thousand men.

Half an hour after nine in the morning, the commodore gave signal to Clinton that he should go on the attack. An hour later the ships-of-war were under way. Gadsden, Cotesworth Pinckney, and the rest at Fort Johnson watched all their movements; in Charleston the wharfs and water-side along the bay were crowded with troops under arms and lookers-on. Their adversary must be foiled, or their city may perish, their houses be sacked and burned, and the savages on the frontier start from their lurking-places. No grievous oppressions weighed down

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the industry of South Carolina ; she came forth to the struggle from generous sympathy ; and now the battle is to be fought for her chief city and the province.

The "Thunderbomb," covered by the "Friendship," began the action by throwing shells, which it continued, till more than sixty were discharged ; of these some burst in the air ; one lighted on the magazine without doing injury ; the rest sunk in the morass, or were buried in the sand within the fort. At about a quarter to eleven, the "Active," of twenty eight guns, disregarding four or five shots fired at her while under sail ; the "Bristol," with fifty guns, having on board Sir Peter Parker and Lord William Campbell, the governor ; the "Experiment," also of fifty guns ; and the "Solebay," of twenty eight, brought up within about three hundred and fifty yards of the fort, let go their anchors with springs upon their cables, and began a most furious cannonade. Every sailor expected that two broadsides would end the strife ; but the soft, fibrous, spongy wood of the palmetto withstood the rapid fire, and neither split, nor splintered, nor started ; and the parapet was high enough to protect the men on the platforms. When broadsides from three or four of the men-of-war struck the logs at the same instant, the shock gave the merlons a tremor, but the pile remained uninjured. Moultrie had but one-tenth as many guns as were brought to bear on him, and was moreover obliged to stint the use of powder. His guns accordingly were fired very slowly, the officers taking aim, and waiting always for the smoke to clear away, that they might point with more precision, "Mind the commodore, mind the fifty-gun ships,"

were the words that passed along the platform from officers and men.

“Shall I send for more powder?” asked Moultrie of Motte.

“To be sure,” said Motte.

And Moultrie wrote to Lee: “I believe we shall want more powder. At the rate we go on, I think we shall; but you can see that. Pray send us more, if you think proper.”

More vessels were seen coming up, and cannon were heard from the north-east. Clinton had promised support; not knowing what else to do, he directed the batteries on Long Island to open a cannonade; and several shells were thrown into Thomson’s intrenchments, doing no damage beyond wounding one soldier. The firing was returned by Thomson with his one eighteen pounder; but, from the distance, with little effect.

At twelve o’clock, the light infantry, grenadiers, and the fifteenth regiment embarked in boats, while floating batteries and armed craft got under way to cover the landing; but the troops never so much as once attempted to land. The detachment had hardly left Long Island before it was ordered to disembark, for it was seen that “the landing was impracticable, and would have been the destruction of many brave men, without the least probability of success.” The American defences were so well constructed, the approach so difficult, Thomson so vigilant, his men such skilful sharpshooters, that had the British landed, they would have been cut to pieces. “It was impossible,” says Clinton, “to decide positively upon any plan;” and he did nothing.

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An attack on Haddrell's Point would have been still more desperate ; though the commodore, at Clinton's request, sent three frigates to coöperate with him in that design. The people of Charleston, as they looked from the battery with senses quickened by the nearness of danger, beheld the "Sphinx," the "Acteon," and the "Syren," each of twenty eight guns, sailing as if to get between Haddrell's Point and the fort, so as to enfilade the works, and when the rebels should be driven from them, to cut off their retreat. It was a moment of danger, for the fort on that side was unfinished ; but the pilots kept too far to the south, so that they run all the three upon a bank of sand, known as the Lower Middle Ground. Gladdened by seeing the frigates thus entangled, the beholders in the town were swayed alternately by fears and hopes ; the armed inhabitants stood every one at his post, uncertain but that they might be called to immediate action, hardly daring to believe that Moultrie's small and ill-furnished garrison could beat off the squadron, when behold ! his flag disappears from their eyes. Fearing that his colors had been struck, they prepared to meet the invaders at the water's edge, trusting in Providence, and preferring death to slavery.

In the fort, William Jasper, a sergeant, perceived that the flag had been cut down by a ball from the enemy, and had fallen over the ramparts. "Colonel," said he to Moultrie, "don't let us fight without a flag."

"What can you do?" asked Moultrie ; "the staff is broken off."

"Then," said Jasper, "I'll fix it to a halberd, and place it on the merlon of the bastion next the enemy ;"

and leaping through an embrasure, and braving the thickest fire from the ship, he took up the flag, returned with it safely, and planted it, as he had promised, on the summit of the merlon.

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The calm sea gleamed with light; the almost vertical sun of midsummer glared from a cloudless sky; and the intense heat was increased by the blaze from the cannon on the platform. All of the garrison threw off their coats during the action, and some were nearly naked; Moultrie and several of the officers smoked their pipes as they gave their orders. The defence was conducted within sight of those whose watchfulness was to them the most animating: they knew that their movements were observed from the house tops of Charleston; by the veteran Armstrong, and the little army at Haddrell's Point; by Gadsden at Fort Johnson, who was almost near enough to take part in the engagement, and was chafing with discontent at not being himself in the centre of danger. Exposed to an incessant cannonade, which seemed sufficient to daunt the bravest veterans, they stuck to their guns with the greatest constancy.

Hit by a ball which entered through an embrasure, Macdaniel cried out to his brother soldiers: "I am dying, but don't let the cause of liberty expire with me this day."

Jasper removed the mangled corpse from the sight of his comrades, and cried aloud: "Let us revenge that brave man's death."

The slow, intermitted fire which was skilfully directed against the commodore and the brave seamen on board the "Bristol," shattered that ship, and carried wounds and death. Never had a British squad-

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ron "experienced so rude an encounter." Neither the tide nor the wind suffered them to retire. Once the springs on the cables of the "Bristol" were swept away; as she swung round with her stern toward the fort, she drew upon herself the fire of all the guns that could be brought to bear upon her. The slaughter was dreadful; of all who in the beginning of the action were stationed on her quarter deck, not one escaped being killed or wounded. At one moment, it is said, the commodore stood there alone, an example of unsurpassed intrepidity and firmness. Morris, his captain, having his fore-arm shattered by a chain-shot, and also receiving a wound in his neck, was taken into the cockpit; but after submitting to amputation, he insisted on being carried on the quarter-deck once more, where he resumed the command, and continued it till he was shot through the body, when, feeling dissolution near, he commended his family to the providence of God and the generosity of his country. Meantime the eyes of the commodore and of all on board his fleet were "frequently, and impatiently," and vainly turned toward the army. If the troops would but coöperate, he was sure of gaining the island; for at about one o'clock he believed that he had silenced the guns of the rebels, and that the fort was on the point of being evacuated. "If this were so," Clinton afterward asked him, "why did you not take possession of the fort, with the seamen and marines whom you practised for the purpose?" And Parker's rejoinder was, that he had no prospect of speedy support from Clinton. But the pause was owing to the scarcity of powder, of which the little that remained to Moultrie was reserved for the mus-

ketry, as a defence against an expected attack from the land forces. Lee should have replenished his stock; but in the heat of the action Moultrie received from him this letter: "If you should unfortunately expend your ammunition without beating off the enemy or driving them on ground, spike your guns and retreat."

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A little later, a better gift and a better message came from Rutledge, now at Charleston: "I send you five hundred pounds of powder. You know our collection is not very great. Honor and victory to you and our worthy countrymen with you. Do not make too free with your cannon. Be cool and do mischief." These five hundred pounds of powder, with two hundred pounds from a schooner lying at the back of the fort, were all the supplies that Moultrie received. At three in the afternoon, Lee, on a report from his aide-de-camp Byrd, sent Muhlenberg's Virginia riflemen to reënforce Thomson. A little before five, Moultrie was able to renew his fire. At about five, the marines in the ships' tops, seeing a lieutenant with eight or ten men remove the heavy barricade from the gateway to the fort, thought that Moultrie and his party were about to retreat; but the gateway was unbarred to receive a visit from Lee. The officers, half naked, and begrimed with the hot day's work, respectfully laid down their pipes as he drew near. The general himself pointed two or three guns, after which he said to Moultrie, "Colonel, I see you are doing very well here, you have no occasion for me, I will go up to town again;" and thus he left the fort.

When at a few minutes past seven the sun went down in a blaze of light, the battle was still raging,

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though the British showed signs of weariness. The inhabitants of Charleston, whom the evening sea breeze collected on the battery, could behold the flag of crescent liberty still proudly waving; and they continued gazing anxiously, till the short twilight was suddenly merged in the deep darkness of a southern night, when nothing was seen but continual flashes, followed by peals as it were of thunder coming out from a heavy cloud. Many thousand shot were fired from the shipping, and hardly a hut or a tree on the island remained unhurt; but the works were very little damaged, and only one gun was silenced. The firing from the fort continued slowly; and the few shot they were able to send were heard to strike against the ships' timbers. Just after nine o'clock, a great part of his ammunition being expended in a cannonade of about ten hours, his people fatigued, the "Bristol" and the "Experiment" made nearly wrecks, the tide of ebb almost done, with no prospect of help from the army at the eastward, and no possibility of his being of any further service, Sir Peter Parker resolved to withdraw. At half-past nine his ships slipped their cables, and dropped down with the tide to their previous moorings.

Of the four hundred and thirty-five Americans in the fort, who took part in this action, all but eleven remained alive, and but twenty six were wounded. At so small a cost of life had Charleston been defended, and a province saved.

When, after a cannonade of about ten hours, the firing ceased, the inhabitants of Charleston remained in suspense, till a boat from Moultrie announced his victory. At morning's dawn the "Acteon" frigate

was seen, fast aground at about four hundred yards from the fort. The "Syren" had got off; and so too had the "Sphinx," yet with the loss of her bowsprit. Some shots were exchanged, but the company of the "Acteon" soon set fire to her, and deserted her. Men from the fort boarded her while she was burning, pointed and discharged two or three of her guns at the commodore, and loaded their three boats from her stores. In one half of an hour after they abandoned her, she blew up, and to the eyes of the Carolinians, the pillar of smoke, as it rose over the vessel, took the form of the palmetto.

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The "Bristol" had forty men killed and seventy one wounded. Lord William Campbell received a contusion in his left side, and, after suffering two years, died from its effects. Sir Peter Parker was slightly injured. About seventy balls went through his ship; her mizzenmast was so much hurt that it fell early the next morning; the mainmast was cut away about fifteen feet below the hounds; and the broad pendant streamed from a jury-mast, lower than the foremast. She had suffered so much in hull, masts, and rigging, that but for the stillness of the sea she must have gone down. On board the "Experiment," twenty three were killed and fifty six wounded; Scott, her captain, lost his left arm, and was otherwise so severely wounded, that his life was long despaired of; the ship was much damaged, her mizzen gaff was shot away. The whole loss of the British fleet, in killed and wounded, was two hundred and five. The royal governors of North Carolina and of South Carolina, as well as Clinton and Cornwallis, and seven regiments, were witnesses of the defeat.

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The commodore and the general long indulged in reciprocal criminations. Nothing remained for the army but to quit the sands of Long Island, yet three weeks more passed away before they embarked in transports for New York, under the single "convoy of the "Solebay" frigate; the rest of the fleet being under the necessity of remaining still longer to refit."

The success of the Carolinians was due to the wisdom and adequateness of their preparations. It saved not a post but a province. It kept seven regiments away from New York for two months; it gave security to Georgia, and three years' peace to Carolina; it dispelled throughout the South the dread of British superiority; it drove the loyalists into shameful obscurity. It was an announcement to the other colonies of the existence of South Carolina as a self-directing republic; a message of brotherhood and union.

29. On the morning of the twenty ninth, Charleston harbor was studded with sails, and alive with the voices of men, hastening to congratulate the victors. They crowded round their deliverers with transports of gratitude; they gazed admiringly on the uninjured walls of the fortress, the ruinous marks of the enemy's shot on every tree and hut in its neighborhood; they enjoyed the sight of the wreck of the "Acteon," of the discomfited men-of-war riding at anchor at two and a half miles' distance; they laughed at the commodore's broad pendant, scarcely visible on a jury main-topmast, while their own blue flag crowned the merlon. Letters of congratulation came down from Rutledge and from Gadsden; and Lee gave his wit-

ness, that "no men ever did behave better, or ever could behave better."

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On the afternoon of the thirtieth, Lee reviewed the garrison, and renewed to them the praise that was their due. While they were thus drawn out, the women of Charleston presented to the second regiment a pair of silken colors, one of blue, one of red, richly embroidered by their own hands; and Susanna Smith Elliott, a scion of one of the oldest families of the colony, who, being left an orphan, had been bred up by Rebecca Brewton Motte, stepped forth to the front of the intrepid band in maternal beauty, young and stately, light-haired, with eyes of mild expression, and a pleasant countenance; and as she put the flags into the hands of Moultrie and Motte, she said in a low, sweet voice: "Your gallant behavior in defence of liberty and your country entitles you to the highest honors; accept these two standards as a reward justly due to your regiment; and I make not the least doubt, under heaven's protection, you will stand by them as long as they can wave in the air of Liberty." And the regiment plighting the word which they were to keep sacredly at the cost of many of their lives, answered: "The colors shall be honorably supported, and shall never be tarnished."

On the fourth of July, Rutledge came to visit the garrison. There stood Moultrie, there Motte, there Marion, there Peter Horry, there William Jasper, and all the survivors of the battle. Rutledge was happy in having insisted on holding possession of the fort; happy in the consciousness of his unwavering reliance on Moultrie; happy in the glory that gathered

July.

CHAP. round the first days of the new-born commonwealth ;
LXVI. and when, in the name of South Carolina, he returned
1776. thanks to the defenders, his burning words gushed
July. forth with an eloquence that adequately expressed
the impassioned gratitude of the people. To Jasper
he offered a lieutenant's commission, which Jasper
modestly declined, accepting only a sword.

South Carolina, by her president and the common
voice, spontaneously decreed that the post on Sulli-
van's Island should, for all future time, be known
as Fort Moultrie; her assembly crowned her victori-
ous sons with applause. The tidings leaped from
colony to colony on their way to the North, and the
continental congress voted their thanks to Lee, Moul-
trie, Thomson, and the officers and men under their
command. But at the time of that vote, congress was
no more the representative of dependent colonies;
the victory at Fort Moultrie was the bright morning
star and harbinger of American Independence.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE RETREAT FROM CANADA.

JANUARY—JULY, 1776.

THE death of Montgomery dispelled the illusion that hovered round the invasion of Canada. The soldiers whose time expired on the last day of December insisted on their discharge; some went off without leave, taking with them their arms; the rest were dejected, and anxious to be at home. There remained encamped near Quebec rather than besieging it, about four hundred Americans and as many wavering Canadians. The force commanded by Carleton was twice as numerous as both, and was concentrated in the well provisioned and strongly fortified town. Yet in the face of disasters and a superior enemy, Arnold preserved his fortitude; "I have no thought," he said, "of leaving this proud town until I enter it in triumph." Montgomery had required an army of ten thousand men; Arnold declared that a less number would not suffice.

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The chief command devolved on Wooster, who

CHAP. was at Montreal; and he wrote in every direction for
 LXVII. aid. To Warner and the Green Mountain Boys he sent
 1776. word, that they must come down as fast as parties
 Jan. could be collected, by fifties or even by tens; of
 to Washington, who had no artillery for his own use, he
 Mar. asked not men only, but heavy cannon and mortars; to the president of congress and to Schuyler he said plainly: "We shall want every thing," men, heavy cannon, mortars, shot, shells, powder, and hard money. Bills of credit had no currency; "money," he reiterated, "we must have, or give up every thing;" "if we are not immediately supplied with hard cash, we must starve, quit the country, or lay it under contribution."

Wherever among the colonies the news spread of Montgomery's fall, there was one general burst of sorrow, and a burning desire to retrieve his defeat. Washington overcame his scruples about initiating measures, and without waiting to consult congress, recommended to Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, each to raise and send forward a regiment on behalf of the continent; and the three colonies eagerly met his call, for the annexation of Canada was then their passion. The continental congress specially encouraged western New Hampshire to complete a regiment for the service; and ordered one regiment from Philadelphia, another from New Jersey, to march for the St. Lawrence without delay. These were to be soon followed by four or five more.

In the first moments of the excitement the summons was obeyed; citizens became soldiers, left the comforts of home with alacrity, and undertook a march of many hundred miles, to a country in that rigor-

ous season almost uninhabitable, through snow and over frozen lakes, without tents, or any shelter from the inclemency of the weather. Their unanimity, their zeal for liberty, their steady perseverance, called forth the most confident predictions of their success; but reflection showed insurmountable obstacles. Since congress for eight months had not been able to furnish Washington, who was encamped in the most thickly peopled part of the country, with the men, clothes, blankets, money, and powder required for the recovery of Boston, how could they hope to keep up the siege of Quebec?

To maintain a foothold in Canada, there was need, in the first place, of the good-will and confidence of its people. Montgomery had from his birth been familiar with Catholics; but Wooster, a New England Calvinist from a country town in Connecticut, cradled in the hatred of popery, irritated the jealousies of the Canadian clergy, who refused absolution to the friends of the Americans, and threatened them from the pulpit with eternal woe. Nor were his manners and frugal style of living suited to win the friendship of the Canadian nobility. But without the support of their priests or their feudal superiors, the fickle and uncertain common people were incapable of being solidly organized, unless the Americans should prove themselves to be the strongest party.

It would therefore be necessary to send into Canada a numerous, well disciplined, and well appointed army, with trains of artillery for a siege. But congress, in its dread of a standing force, had no troops at all except on short enlistments; among the New England men, who were the first to move, there was little apt-

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ness for military subordination; and if Washington found it difficult to reduce them to order, if Schuyler almost threw up the attempt, if Montgomery suffered from their querulousness even while leading them to victory, what was to be expected from fresh levies of imperfectly armed villagers, who for the most part had never seen war, and, alike officers and men, could never have acquired the sentiment of soldierly obedience, or the habit of courage in danger? Moreover, the distance was an obstacle in respect to which England had the advantage; the path across the Atlantic and up the St. Lawrence was more easily traversed than the road by land from the colonies to Quebec. A real American army of ten thousand men was wanted, and by the middle of March no more than fifteen hundred had reached Montreal. The royalists in Canada began to cry victory, and were bolder than ever.

The relations with the Indians became alarming; yet Schuyler dissuaded from any attempt at employing them; and congress voted not to suffer them to serve in its armies without the previous consent of the tribes in a national council, nor then without its own express approval. But to guard against dangers from the Five Nations, James Deane was sent with the returning deputations from the Oneidas and the seven tribes in Canada. On the journey they marched in Indian file, and at sunset encamped in a grove of hemlocks, of which the boughs furnished beds. The council, in which the nations were much divided, began on the twenty eighth of March with the usual ceremonies to wipe away tears, to cleanse from blood, to lighten the grief which choked speech. The next day was

given to acts of condolence, when new trees, as they expressed it, were raised in the place of chiefs who had fallen, and their names published to the Six Nations. On the thirty first, the confederated tribes gave each other pledges to observe a strict neutrality in the present quarrel. Nothing amazed them more than the flight of the British from Boston.

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For four months Wooster remained the highest officer in Canada. All accounts agree that he was "unfit, totally unfit" for so important a station, which he had never sought, and which he desired to surrender to an officer of higher rank. Yet he did some things well; in the early part of his command he arrested Campbell, the Indian agent of the British, and La Corne St. Luc, and sent them out of the province. Like a true New England man, he allowed each parish to choose its own officers, thus introducing the system of self-government in towns. He also intended to employ committees of safety and committees of correspondence, and thus lead the way to a Canadian convention, which might send delegates to the general congress. When a friend wished he might enter Quebec through its gates, "Not so, but over its walls," was his reply; and they were not mere words of rodomontade, for the aged man was brave. He was too old to unlearn his partiality for Connecticut, and sometimes paid his men in hard money, when those round Quebec got only paper; and sometimes granted a furlough which carried pay, instead of a discharge. With Schuyler, who was far the more testy of the two, he had constant bickerings, which attracted the attention and divided the opinion of congress. ;

On the first day of April Wooster took command Apr.

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of the troops round Quebec. The garrison laughed as they saw from the ramparts the general, now venerable from age, and distinguished by his singularly large wig, walking solemnly along the walls, to spy out their weak parts. Scattered round Quebec, on both sides of the river, and at great distances from each other, lay about two thousand men; of whom not many more than half were able to do duty. How to supply them with food was a great difficulty. The insignificant batteries of three light guns and one howitzer on Point Levi; of twice that number of guns, two howitzers, and two small mortars on the heights of Abraham; and of two guns at the Traverse; were harmless to the enemy; the store of powder did not exceed three or four tons; of shot, ten or twelve; there were no engineers, and few artillerists; of the troops who had wintered in Canada, constituting more than half of the whole number, the time of service would expire on the fifteenth of April, when neither art, nor money, nor entreaty, would be able to prevail on them to remain. Livingston's regiment of about two hundred Canadians would be free on the same day, and very few of them would reëngage. Without the immediate support of eight or ten thousand men, a good train of artillery, and a full military chest, it was plain that the ministerial troops would easily regain the country. Arnold, at his own solicitation, withdrew to Montreal.

The regiments sent forward to Canada, arrived at Albany in a very incomplete state, and were further thinned on the march by sickness and desertion. The Canadians who had confided in Montgomery and given him aid before Quebec, now only waited an

opportunity to rise against the Americans. The country was outraged by the arbitrariness of the military occupation; the peasantry had been forced to furnish wood and other articles at less than the market price, or for promissory certificates; the clergy, neglected or ill used, were unanimously hostile; of the more cultivated classes, both French and English, seven eighths favored the British, and were willing to assist in driving back the invaders. The savages kept aloof from the Americans, and it was feared would, early in the spring, fall on their frontier.

Alarmed by constant unfavorable reports, congress, on the twentieth, by its president, urged Washington to hasten the departure of four battalions destined for Quebec, as "a week, a day, even an hour might prove decisive;" but on the twentieth and twenty first, before receiving the letters, he had despatched them, under Thompson of Pennsylvania as brigadier. Two or three days later, the unsuccessful attempt of the Canadians, near the end of March, under Beaujeu, to raise the blockade of Quebec, became known; and though Washington at that moment was in want of men, arms, and money, congress, giving way to its unchecked impulses, declared itself "determined on the reduction of Quebec," and without even consulting the commander in chief, suddenly and peremptorily ordered him to detach six additional battalions from his army for service in Canada, and further inquired of him if he could spare more.

Late at night on the twenty fifth Washington received the order by express; his effective force on that day consisted of but eight thousand three hundred and one; and of this small force, poorly armed

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and worse clad, he detached six of his best battalions, containing more than three thousand men, at a time when the British ministry was directing against him thirty thousand veteran troops. The command of the brigade was given to Sullivan; among its officers were Stark and Reed of New Hampshire, Anthony Wayne and Irvine of Pennsylvania. The troops were scantily provided for the march; some companies had not a waistcoat among them all, and but one shirt to a man.

It was a most touching spectacle to see Washington resign himself to the ill considered votes of congress, and, parsimonious of complaint, send off his best troops to Canada at their word, even though it left him bare, and exposed to the greatest dangers. "I could wish the army in Canada more powerfully reënforced," he wrote to congress; "at the same time, trusting New York and Hudson river to the handful of men remaining here, is running too great a risk. The securing this post and Hudson River is of so great importance, that I cannot at present advise the sending any more troops from hence; on the contrary, the general officers now here think it absolutely necessary to increase the army at this place with at least ten thousand men."

Destitute of hard money, congress requested the New England States to collect as much of it as they could, and forward it to Schuyler. Having stripped Washington of ten battalions, or about half his effective force, they next ordered that provisions, powder, of which his stock was very low, and articles of clothing for ten thousand men, should follow. Ten thousand was the number of men which all agreed

was necessary for Canada, and they were resolved to maintain that number on the St. Lawrence, leaving Washington very much to his own devices and the effect of solicitations addressed to the colonies nearest him, at a time when it was the grand plan of the English to take possession of Hudson river.

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For Canada an able general was wanted not less than an army. Schuyler having refused the service, and Lee having been transferred to the South, Putnam stood next in rank; but Washington, who judged him leniently as an executive officer, saw his utter incompetency to a distant, separate command. Thomas of Massachusetts, a man of less experience but superior ability and culture, was, therefore, raised to the rank of major general, and ordered to Quebec. To complete the misery of the army with which he was to hold Canada, the small pox raged among the soldiers; Thomas had never been inoculated, and his journey to the camp was a journey to meet death unattended by glory.

He was closely followed by Franklin, Chase, and Charles Carroll, whom congress had commissioned to promise a guarantee of their estates to the clergy; to establish a free press; to hold out to the people of Canada the alluring prospect of a free trade with all nations; and to invite them to set up a government for themselves, and join the federal union. John Carroll, the brother of Charles, a Jesuit, afterwards archbishop of Baltimore, came also, in the vain hope as an ecclesiastic of moderating the opposition of the Canadian clergy. The commissioners discovered on their arrival a general apprehension that the Americans would be driven out of the province; so that

CHAP. without a restoration of credit by the use of hard
LXVII. money, and without a large army, they could not ask
1776. the people to take part in continuing the war.
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Thomas arrived near Quebec on the first of May, and employed the next three days in ascertaining the condition of his command. He found one thousand nine hundred men, including officers. Of these, nine hundred were sick, chiefly with the small pox; out of the remaining thousand, three hundred were soldiers whose enlistments had expired on the fifteenth of April, and who refused duty, or were very importunate to return home. This small army occupied several posts so distant from each other, that not more than three hundred men could be rallied against any sudden attack. In all the magazines there remained but about one hundred and fifty pounds of powder, and six days' provisions. The French inhabitants were much disaffected, so that supplies were obtained from them with great difficulty.

On the fifth, he called a council of war, who agreed unanimously to prepare for a retreat by removing the invalids immediately to Three Rivers, and embarking the cannon as soon as possible. The wise decision was made too late; that same evening ships arrived before Quebec. Early on the sixth, the Surprise frigate, the Isis, and the sloop Martin, which had forced their way up the river when it was almost impracticable from ice, came into the basin, and landed their marines and that part of the twenty ninth which they had on board; and not far from noon, while the Americans were embarking their sick and their artillery, the garrison, thus reënforced about one thousand strong, in two divisions, formed in columns six deep,

with a train of six cannon, made a sally out of St. John's and St. Louis's gates, and attacked the American sentinels and main guard. Thomas attempted to bring his men under arms ; but unable to collect more than two hundred and fifty on the plains, he directed a retreat to Deschambault, forty eight miles above Quebec. The troops fled with the utmost precipitation and confusion, leaving their provisions, cannon, and five hundred muskets, and about two hundred of their sick. Of these, one half crept away from the hospitals as they could ; and they fell into the hands of merciful men ; the Canadian peasants nursed them with the kindness that their religion required ; and Carleton, by proclamation, offered them proper care in the general hospital, with leave to return home when their health should be restored.

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At Deschambault Thomas again held a council of war, and by a vote of twelve to three, it was carried that the half-starved army should not attempt to make a stand below Sorel. The English who were in pursuit, less forbearing towards French insurgents than towards colonists of the same stock with themselves, carried the torch in their hands, to burn the houses of those who had befriended the rebels.

On the eighth the ship of war Niger and three transports with the forty seventh regiment from Halifax, on the tenth the Triton with more transports and troops, came in, and others continued to arrive. At the same time Sir John Johnson, whom Schuyler had left free on his parole, stirred up an attack by regulars, Canadians, and Indians from the northwest. To guard against this new danger, Arnold stationed Bedel, of New Hampshire, with about four hundred

CHAP. men and two cannon, at the narrow pass of the Ce-
LXVII. dars. This pass was but fifteen leagues above Mon-
treuil; and Thomas, at Sorel, was but as many leagues
1776. distant below.
May.

The American commissioners calmly looked at things as they were; and with manly resolution gave distinct advice. They observed that the invaders had lost the affections of the Canadian people; that for the want of hard money to support themselves with honor, they were distressed for provisions; that they were incapable of exact discipline, because sent for short periods of service; that, always too few in numbers, they were disheartened and wasted by the small pox; and they wrote: "We report it as our firm and unanimous opinion, that it is better immediately to withdraw the army from Canada, and fortify the passes on the lakes." They even wished that Sullivan's brigade might be stopped at Fort George.

But the continental congress, which had summoned Washington to Philadelphia for consultation on the defence of the middle colonies, reasoned differently on learning the retreat from Quebec. It considered the loss of Canada as exposing the frontiers of New York and New England not to Indians only but to the ravages of the British; it therefore enjoined Thomas to "display his military qualities, and acquire laurels." Of hard money it sent forward all that was in its treasury, which was no more than sixteen hundred sixty two pounds one shilling and three pence; and having vainly tried every method to collect more, and being still bent on supporting the expedition, it resolved to supply the troops in Canada with provisions and clothing from the other colonies.

Its resolutions were unmeaning words; it could not command adequate means of transportation, nor had it magazines on which it could draw; besides, the campaign in Canada was decided, before its votes were made known.

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The detachment from Detroit under Captain Forster, composed of forty of the eighth regiment, a hundred Canadians, and several hundred Indians from the northwest, appeared in sight of the Cedars. Bedel, commander of the fort, committing it to Major Butterfield, deserted under pretence of soliciting a reënforcement. On his arrival at Montreal, Arnold, on the sixteenth, detached Major Henry Sherburne of Rhode Island with one hundred and forty men to relieve the fort; but before he could make his way through the enemy to the Cedars, Butterfield, on the nineteenth, though he had two field-pieces and sufficient ammunition, and officers and men willing to defend the post, cowered like a craven under a dread of the Indians, and after sustaining no other attack than from musketry, surrendered himself and his garrison prisoners at discretion.

The next day, as Sherburne, ignorant of the surrender, came to the entrance of a wood which was about five miles from the fort, he was attacked while still in open ground by an enemy who fought under cover of trees. After a skirmish of an hour, the Americans were intercepted in their attempt at a retreat, and more than a hundred of them were taken prisoners. The savages, who lost in the battle a great warrior of the Seneca tribe, immediately stripped them almost naked, tomahawking or scalping the wounded men; so that twenty eight were killed in

CHAP. battle, or murdered afterwards in cold blood, in viola-
 LXVII. tion of the express terms of surrender, as well as of
 1776. humanity.
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At the news of the double disaster, Arnold moved with about seven hundred men to recover the captives by force; but as the British officer declared a massacre of the prisoners, four hundred and seventy four in number, would be the inevitable consequence of an attack, he consented to obtain the release of them all, except four captains who were retained as hostages, by promising the return of an equal number of British prisoners. The engagement led to mutual criminations; the Americans preferred a claim for the punishment of those who had massacred some of the prisoners.

In this manner the British drew near Montreal from the west. From the lower side news came, that Thomas had been seized by the small pox. But the commissioners, in their contempt for the capacity of Wooster, would not suffer him to resume the command; and thought the best service he could render the cause would be to return home. At the end of May, confusion prevailed in every department of the army. There could be no discipline among soldiers enlisted only for a year, or a shorter term, some only for two months; the troops lived from hand to mouth, often for days without meat, levying contributions of meal; the scattered army did not exceed four thousand men, three fourths of whom had never had the small pox; many of the officers were incompetent.

June. While Arnold's whole thoughts were bent on making a safe retreat, the congress at Philadelphia, on the first day of June, in the helplessness of its zeal,

resolved "that six thousand militia be employed to reënforce the army in Canada, and to keep up the communication with that province;" and called upon Massachusetts to make up half that number, Connecticut one quarter, New Hampshire and New York the rest. They also authorized the employment of Indians.

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On that same day, the first division of the Brunswick troops under Riedesel arrived with Burgoyne at Quebec, and, with the regiments from Ireland and others, put into the hands of Carleton an army of nine thousand nine hundred and eighty four effective men, well disciplined, and abundantly provided with all the materials of war. Henceforth the Americans were in imminent danger of being cut off and utterly destroyed.

The death of Thomas on the second, left the command to Sullivan. Arriving with his party at Sorel on the fifth, he assumed it with the mistaken confidence and ostentation of inexperience. "In a few days," said he, "I can reduce the army to order, and put a new face upon our affairs here." A council of war resolved on an attempt against the enemy at Three Rivers; a party of about fifteen hundred, mostly Pennsylvanians, including the regiments of St. Clair, Wayne, and Irvine, was placed for that purpose under the command of Thompson. "I am determined," wrote Sullivan to Washington, "to hold the most important posts as long as one stone is left upon another." At one o'clock in the morning of the seventh, Thompson and his party arrived at St. Clair's station on the Nicolet; lay hid in the woods on its bank during the day; and in the evening crossed the St. Lawrence, intending a surprise on a party

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which was not supposed to exceed four hundred. But a Canadian peasant, as soon as they landed, hastened to inform General Frazer at Three Rivers of their approach; and moreover, twenty five transports, laden with troops, had, by Carleton's directions, been piloted past Quebec without stopping, and had arrived at Three Rivers just in time to take part in repelling the attack. A large force was promptly landed with field-pieces; and was disposed with a view to surround and take captive the whole body of assailants. The short darkness of that latitude was soon over; as day began to appear, the Americans, who were marching under the bank of the river, were cannonaded from the ships; undismayed they took their way through a thickly wooded swamp, above their knees in mire and water; and after a most wearisome struggle of four hours reached an open piece of low ground, where they endeavored to form. Wayne began the attack, and forced an advanced party to run; his companions then pressed forward in column against the breastworks, which covered the main body of the enemy. They displayed undisputed gallantry; but being outnumbered more than three to one, were compelled to retire. To secure time for the retreat, Wayne and Allen, with about five officers and twenty men, sheltered by the dense forest, which hid the paucity of their numbers, kept up a fire from the edge of the swamp for an hour longer, when they also were obliged to fly. Thompson and Irvine, who were separated from the rest of the party, were betrayed by the Canadians; about one hundred and fifty of the fugitives were taken prisoners; the main body, saved, as British

officers asserted, by Carleton's want of alertness, and his calling in the parties that guarded the fords of the Du Loup, wandered about that day and the following night, without food or refreshment except water, and worn out by watching and fatigue. On the ninth they found their boats, and returned to Sorel. The American loss exceeded two hundred; Wayne's regiment, which began the attack, suffered the most.

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"I now think only of a glorious death, or a victory obtained against superior numbers," wrote Sullivan, as he learned that the force intended for Canada was arrived, with Burgoyne at its head; and he would have remained at Sorel. The post was not defensible; the remains of the army, encamped there, did not exceed two thousand five hundred men; about a thousand more were at other stations, but most of them under inoculation. Sickness, want of regular and sufficient food, the recent repulse, the threefold superiority of the British in numbers, and their incomparable superiority in appointments, made resistance impossible. Slow and cautious as were Carleton's movements, any further delay would enable the British to pass above them, take post in their rear, and cut off their retreat. A council of field officers was all but unanimous for quitting the ground; Arnold, Antill, and Hazen, who were not present, were of the same opinion.

On the fourteenth, the fleet with the British forces was coming up the river under full sail; when an hour or a little more before their arrival, Sullivan broke up his camp, taking away with him every thing,

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even to a spade. The guard at Berthier retreated by land, leaving nine boats behind.

At Chambly all the boats and baggage were brought over the rapids, except three heavy pieces of cannon. Arnold with his little garrison of three hundred men remained at Montreal till the enemy were at twelve miles' distance from him, and having, under the plea of instructions from Schuyler, seized such parcels of goods as could be serviceable to the army, crossed safely to La Prairie. All that was left of the invading army met on the seventeenth at St. John's; one half of them being sick, almost all destitute of clothing, and having no provisions except salt pork and flour. On the eighteenth, the emaciated, half naked men, broken in strength and in discipline, too weak to have beaten off an assault from the enemy, as pitiable a spectacle as could be seen, removed to Isle aux Noix, where Sullivan proposed to await express orders from Schuyler. They were languidly pursued by a column under the command of Burgoyne, who excused his inactivity by pleading instructions from Carleton to hazard nothing till the column on his right should be able to coöperate with him.

Meanwhile congress had introduced a new element of confusion. On the day on which Sullivan halted at Isle aux Noix, Gates, who enjoyed the friendship of John Adams, and had been elected a major-general, was appointed to take command of the forces in Canada. The appointment could give Schuyler no umbrage, for he himself had uniformly refused to go into Canada; but no sooner had Gates reached Albany than the question arose, whether the command



would not revert to Schuyler the moment the army should be found south of the Canada line.

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At Isle aux Noix the men fit for duty remained for eight days, till the invalids could be taken to Crown Point. The voyage was made in leaky boats which had no awnings; so that the sick lay drenched in water and exposed to the sun. Their only food was raw pork, and hard bread or unbaked flour. A physician who was an eye-witness said: "At the sight of so much privation and distress, I wept till I had no more power to weep." When, early in July, all the fragments of the army of Canada had reached Crown Point, the scene of distress produced a momentary despair. Every thing about them, their clothes, their blankets, the air, the very ground they trod on, was infected with the pestilence. "I did not look into a tent or a hut," says Trumbull, "in which I did not find either a dead or dying man." Of about five thousand men, housed under tents, or rudely built sheds, or huts of brush, exposed to the damp air of the night, full half were invalids; more than thirty new graves were made every day. In a little more than two months the northern army lost by desertion and death more than five thousand men.

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## CHAPTER LXVIII.

### THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED COLONIES DEMAND INDEPENDENCE.

JUNE—JULY, 1776.

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AMERICAN independence was not an act of sudden passion, nor the work of one man or one assembly. It had been discussed in every part of the country by farmers and merchants, by mechanics and planters, by the fishermen along the coast and by the backwoodsmen of the West; in town meetings and from the pulpit; at social gatherings and around the camp fires; in newspapers and in pamphlets; in county conventions and conferences of committees; in colonial congresses and assemblies. The decision was put off only to hear the voice of the people. Virginia having uttered her will, and communicated it to all her sister colonies, proceeded, as though independence had been proclaimed, to form her constitution. More counsellors waited on her assembly than they took notice of: they were aided in their deliberations by the teachings of the lawgivers of Greece; by the long line of magistrates who had framed the Roman

code; by those who had written best in English on government and public freedom; but most of all by the great example of the English constitution, which was an aristocratic republic with a permanent executive. They passed by monarchy and hereditary aristocracy as unessential forms, and looked behind them for the self-subsistent elements of English liberty.

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The principles of the Virginia declaration of rights remained to her people as a perpetual possession, and a pledge of indefinite progress in happier and more tranquil days; but for the moment internal reforms were postponed; the elective franchise was not extended; nor was anything done to abolish slavery beyond the prohibition of the slave trade. The king of England possessed the crown by birth and for life; the chief executive of Virginia owed his place to an election by the general assembly, and retained it for one year. The king was intrusted with a veto power, limited within Britain, extravagant and even retrospective in the colonies; the recollection that "by an inhuman use of his negative he had refused them permission to exclude negroes by law," misled the Virginians to withhold the veto power from the governor of their own choice.

The governor, like the king, had at his side an elective privy council; and in the construction of this body of eight men, the desire of some permanent element of government is conspicuous. Braxton, in the scheme which he forwarded from congress, wishing to come as near as possible to the forms of monarchy, would have had the governor continue in authority during good behavior, the council of state hold their places for life, in order that they might

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possess all the weight, stability, and dignity due to the importance of their office. But Patrick Henry, Mason, and the other chief members of the convention did not share this dread of the power of the people; and nothing more was conceded than that two only of the eight councillors should be triennially changed, so that the whole body was to be renewed only once in the course of twelve years. The governor with their advice had the appointment of militia officers and of justices of the peace; but the general assembly by joint ballot elected the treasurer, the judges, and the officers of the higher courts. The general assembly, like the British parliament, consisted of two branches: an annual house of delegates, and a senate of twenty four members. The state was to be divided into twenty four districts for the choice of senators, of whom one fourth were to be renewed each year.

The convention recognised the territorial rights of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas, and the limit set by the peace of 1763; otherwise it claimed jurisdiction over all the region, granted by the second charter of King James the First. The privilege of purchasing Indian titles was reserved to the public; but by resolves of the convention, a right of pre-emption was secured to actual settlers on unappropriated lands.

In framing the constitution George Mason had a principal part, aided by the active participation of Richard Henry Lee and of George Wythe; a form of government, sent by Jefferson, arrived too late; but his draft of a preamble was adopted, and he was looked to by Wythe to become the author of further reform. The institutions of Virginia then established, like every thing else which is the work of man's hands,



were marked by imperfection; yet they called into being a republic, of which the ideal sovereignty, representing the unity of all public functions, resided in the collective people. It rose above the horizon in a season of storm, but the surrounding clouds were edged with light. The convention, having on the twenty ninth of June unanimously adopted the constitution, at once transformed itself into a temporary general assembly, and made choice by ballot of a governor and a privy council. For governor the choice fell on Patrick Henry; and on the first day of July, he, who had so lately been the subject of a king, and had been surrounded by fellow-subjects, became the chief magistrate over his fellow-citizens of the commonwealth which, he said, had just formed "a system of government wisely calculated to secure equal liberty," and which did not shrink from bearing a principal part in a war "involving the lasting happiness of a great proportion of the human species."

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On the fourteenth of June, the Connecticut assembly, urged by the invitation and example of Virginia, instructed its delegates in favor of independence, foreign alliances, and a permanent union of the colonies; but the plan of confederation was not to go into effect till it should receive the assent of the several legislatures. At the same time, the puritan commonwealth, which had enjoyed a republican government more than a hundred years, cast the slough of royalty, and established administrative independence.

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On the same day and the next, the Delaware assembly, at the instance of Mackean, unanimously approved the resolution of congress of the fifteenth of May, overturned the proprietary government within

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her borders, substituted her own name on all occasions for that of the king, and gave to her delegates new instructions which left them at liberty to vote respecting independence according to their judgment.

On the fifteenth, the council and assembly of New Hampshire, in reply to a letter from Bartlett and Whipple, their delegates in congress, unanimously voted in favor of "declaring the Thirteen United Colonies a free and independent state; and solemnly pledged their faith and honor to support the measure with their lives and fortunes."

May.

In May the assembly of Massachusetts advised the people in their town meetings to instruct their representatives on the question of independence; and a very great majority of the towns, all that were heard from, declared for independence unanimously.

The choice of all New England was spontaneous and undoubted. Its extended line of sea-coast, winding round inlets and headlands, and rent with safe and convenient harbors, defied the menace of a blockade; and except that Newport was coveted by the British as a shelter for their fleet, the ruggedness of its soil, and its comparatively compact population, gave it a sense of security against the return of the enemy.

Far different was the position of New York, which was the first of the large central colonies to mark out irrevocably her system. Devoted to commerce, she yet possessed but one seaport on the main, and if that great mart should fall into the hands of the British, she must, for the indefinite time of its occupation, resign all maritime intercourse with other colonies and with the world. The danger was not vague and distant; it was close at hand, distinctly known, and in-

evitable. On the twenty fourth of May, the vote of the continental congress of the fifteenth, recommending the establishment of a new government, was referred to John Morin Scott, Haring, Remsen, Lewis, Jay, Cuyler, and Broome; three days later, Remsen reported from the committee, that the right of creating civil government is and ought to be in the people, and that the old form of government was dissolved; accordingly, on the thirty first, resolutions were proposed by Scott, Jay, and Haring, ordering elections for deputies, with ample powers to institute a government which should continue in force until a future peace with Great Britain. But early in June the New York congress had to pass upon the Virginia proposition of independence. This was the moment that showed the firmness and the purity of Jay; the darker the hour, the more he stood ready to cheer; the greater the danger, the more promptly he stepped forward to guide. He had insisted on the doubtful measure of a second petition to the king, with no latent weakness of purpose or cowardice of heart. The hope of obtaining redress was gone; he could now, with perfect peace of mind, give free scope to the earnestness of his convictions. Though it had been necessary for him to perish as a martyr, he could not and he would not swerve from his sense of duty. Joining a scrupulous obedience to his idea of right with inflexibility of purpose, he could not admit that the provincial congress then in session had been vested with power to dissolve the connection with Great Britain, and he therefore held it necessary first to consult the people themselves. For this end, on the eleventh of June, the New York congress, on

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his motion, called upon the freeholders and electors of the colony to confer on the deputies whom they were about to choose full powers of administering government, framing a constitution, and deciding the great question of independence.

In this manner the unanimity of New York was insured; her decision did not remain a moment longer in doubt; though it could not be formally announced till after the election of its convention. It was taken in the presence of extreme danger, against which there was no hope that adequate preparations would be made. Bands of savages hovered on the extended inland frontier of the province; the army, which was to have protected her on the side of Canada, was flying before disease and want and a vastly superior force; an irresistible fleet was approaching the harbor of her chief city, and a veteran army of overwhelming strength, computed by no one at less than thirty thousand, was almost in sight. The whole number of rank and file in Washington's army, present and fit for duty, was on the morning of the twelfth of June but six thousand seven hundred and forty nine, with four hundred men in a continental regiment of artillery, and one single provincial company of artillery, raised probably through the zeal of Alexander Hamilton, who, though not yet twenty years old, had after an examination been judged qualified to command it, and had in March been appointed its captain. Of the infantry many were without arms; one regiment had only ninety seven firelocks and seven bayonets, others were in nearly as bad a state, and no one was well armed. In numbers the regiments from the east were deficient from twenty to fifty; and few as the men were,



the term of the enlistment of every one of them would arrive in a few months. Little had been done by congress to reënforce Washington except to pass votes ordering out large numbers of militia from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, and still again more militia under the name of the flying camps of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland; and none of these were to be engaged beyond December. Congress had not yet authorized the employment of men for three years or for the war; nor did it do so till near the end of June, when it was too late for any success in enlistments; the feeble army then under Washington's command, was, by the conditions of its existence, to melt away in the autumn and coming winter.

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Moreover a secret plot was fostered by Tryon, who, ever unscrupulous and indefatigable, from on board the *Duchess of Gordon*, sought through the royalist mayor of the city of New York and others to prepare a body of conspirators, who should raise an insurrection in aid of Howe on his arrival, blow up the magazines, gain possession of the guns, and seize Washington and his principal officers. Some of the inferior agents were suspected of having intended to procure Washington's death. There were full proofs that the plan against his army was prosecuted with the utmost diligence; but it was discovered before it was matured. It is certain that two or three of his own guard were partners in the scheme of treachery; and one of them, after conviction before a court martial, was hanged. It was the first military execution of the revolution. This discovery of danger from secret foes, made no change in the conduct of the commander

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in chief; he placed his trust "in the protection of an all-wise and beneficent Being," and knew no fear.

The new provincial congress of New Jersey, which came fresh from the people, with ample powers, and organized itself in the evening of the eleventh of June, was opened with prayer by John Witherspoon, an eloquent Scottish minister of the same faith with John Knox; a man of great ability, learning, and liberality, ready to dash into pieces all images of false gods. Born near Edinburgh, trained up at its university, in 1768 he removed to Princeton, to become the successor of Jonathan Edwards, Davies, and Finley, as president of its college. A combatant of skepticism and the narrow philosophy of the materialists, he was deputed by Somerset county to take part in applying his noble theories to the construction of a civil government.

The body of which he was a member was instructed to prepare for the defence of the colony against an enemy whose arrival was hourly expected with force enough to lay waste its villages and drench its plains in blood; next, to decide the question of independence; and lastly, to form and establish a constitution. They promptly resolved to reënforce the army of New York with three thousand three hundred of the militia. William Franklin, the last royalist governor, still lingered at Perth Amboy; and in the hope of dividing public opinion by the semblance of a regular constitutional government, he had, by proclamation, called a meeting of the general assembly for the twentieth of June. The convention, on the fourteenth, voted that his proclamation ought not to be heeded; the next day he was arrested; as he re-

fused to give his parole, he was kept under guard till he could be removed to Connecticut. On the twenty second, it was resolved by a vote of fifty four against three, "that a government be formed for regulating the internal police of the colony, pursuant to the recommendation of the continental congress;" and in that congress five friends to independence were then elected to represent New Jersey. As the constitution was reported before independence had been declared, a clause provided for the contingency of a reconciliation; otherwise this charter from the people was to remain firm and inviolable. Its principles were: a legislative power intrusted to two separate houses; a governor annually chosen by the legislature, and possessing only a casting vote in one branch of the legislature; judges to be appointed by the legislature for seven years and for five years; the elective franchise to be exercised by all inhabitants of full age, who had been residents for twelve months, and possessed fifty pounds proclamation money. No Protestant could be denied any rights or franchises on account of his religious principles; and to every person within the colony were guaranteed the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and an immunity from all tithes or church rates, except in conformity to his own engagements.

On the eighteenth of June the committees of Philadelphia and of the several counties of Pennsylvania met at Carpenters' Hall in a provincial conference. The duty which they had to perform was imperative, and yet necessarily the occasion of a bitter domestic feud. The old proprietary government, in an existence of more than ninety years, had won the admira-

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tion of the wise throughout the world by its respect for religious and civil liberty, had kept itself free from the suspicion of having instigated or approved the obnoxious measures of the British ministry, and had maintained the attitude of a mediator between parliament and America. When the obstinacy of the king left no room for reconciliation, its career was run, and it came naturally to its end. Such of the members of the assembly as remained in their places, confessed in a formal vote their "despair" of again bringing together a quorum; and when, according to the charter, they could only have kept their body alive by adjourning from day to day, they made an illegal adjournment to a day nearly two months later than that appointed for the vote of congress on independence, leaving the measures of defence unattended to. The adjournment was an abdication; and the people prepared promptly and somewhat roughly to supersede the expiring system. Nor were the proposed changes restricted only to forms; a fierce demand broke out for an immediate extension of the right of suffrage to those "whom," it was held, "the resolve of congress had now rendered electors."

The provincial conference was necessarily composed of men who had hitherto not been concerned in the government; the old members of the assembly were most of them bound by their opinions, and all of them by their oaths, to keep aloof; Franklin, who by never taking his place in that body had preserved his freedom, would not place himself glaringly in contrast with his colleagues, and stayed away; while Reed, observing "that the province would be in the summer a great scene of party and contention," withdrew



to the army, in which Washington had "pressed him to accept the" vacant "office of adjutant-general."

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On the eighteenth Thomas Mackean was chosen president of the conference. On the nineteenth, one hundred and four members being present, the resolution of congress of the fifteenth of May was read twice, and after mature consideration was unanimously approved; the present government of the colony was condemned as incompetent; and a new one was ordered to be formed on the authority of the people only. Every other colony had shunned the mixture of questions of internal reform with the question of the relation to Great Britain; but here a petition was read from Germans, praying that all associators who were taxable might vote. In the old election to the assembly the possession of fifty pounds proclamation money was required as the qualification of a voter, both in the city under its charter and in the counties, and the foreign born must further have been naturalized under a law which required an oath of allegiance to the British king; the conference revived the simple provision of "the Great Law" of December, 1682, and endowed every taxpayer with the right to vote for members of the constituent convention. So neither poverty nor place of birth any more disabled freemen; in Pennsylvania, liberty claimed for the builders of her house the rich and the poor, the German, the Scot, the Englishman, the Irishman, as well as the native. Thus the Germans were incorporated into the people, and made one with them; the emigrants who spoke the language of Lessing and Kant, became equal members of the new city of humanity.

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While in this manner the divisions of nationalities were broken in pieces, the conference, at the instance of Christopher Marshall, who had been educated among the Friends, and had left the society, because he held it right to draw the sword in defence of civil liberty, resolved that the members elected to the convention should be required to declare their faith in God the Father, Christ his eternal Son, and the Holy Spirit, and in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. For this interference he was much censured; but the pure minded mystic would not perceive that he was justifying the exclusiveness of the Catholic and of the Anglican church.

It had not been the intention of the conference to perform administrative acts; yet to repair the grievous neglect of the assembly, they ordered a flying camp of six thousand men to be called out, in conformity to the vote of the continental congress.

One thing more remained: on the afternoon of the twenty fourth, on the report of a committee composed of Mackean, Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia, and James Smith of York county, the conference, with perfect unanimity, all its members giving their voices one by one, pronounced, in behalf of themselves and their constituents, their willingness to concur in a vote of congress declaring the United Colonies to be free and independent states; and a copy of their vote, having been signed at the table, was, by Mackean, the president, delivered directly to congress.

Far happier were the people of Maryland, for they acted with moderation and unanimity; their counsels sprung from a sense of right, and from sympathy with their sister colonies, especially Virginia.

Chase, now the foremost civilian in Maryland, the ablest of their delegates in the continental congress, a friend to law not less than to liberty, ever attracted towards the lovers of established government, had always, on the question of independence, kept ahead of men who otherwise agreed with him. Guided by his clear understanding and vehement will, the patriots of all classes, the most eager and the laggards, joined hands. In May and the early part of June, the people, in county meetings, renounced the hope of reconciliation; listening to their voices, the committee of safety called a convention; and that body, assembling on the twenty first of June, placed itself in the closest relations with its constituents. On the request of any one delegate, the yeas and nays might be taken and entered in its journal; its debates and proceedings were public. Its measures for calling its militia into active service were prompt and efficient. On the afternoon of the day on which Moultrie repelled the British squadron from Charleston, it concurred with Virginia on the subject of independence, a confederation, treaties with foreign powers, and the reservation of the internal government of each colony to its own people; and five days later, while the continental congress was still considering the form of its declaration of independence, it directed the election of a new convention, to create a government by the authority of the people only.

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## CHAPTER LXIX.

### THE RESOLUTION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE FIRST AND SECOND OF JULY, 1776.

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ON the morning of the first of July, the day set apart for considering the resolution of independence, John Adams, confident as if the vote had been taken, invoked the blessing of heaven to make the new-born republic more glorious than any which had gone before. His heart melted with sorrow at the disasters and sufferings of the army that had been in Canada; he knew that England, having now recovered that province, commanded the upper lakes and the Mississippi; that she had a free communication with all the numerous tribes of Indians, extending along the frontiers of all the colonies, and would induce them to take up the hatchet, and by bloodshed and fire drive in the inhabitants upon the middle settlements, at a time when the coasts might be ravaged by the British navy, and a single day might bring the army before New York. Independence could be obtained only by a great expense of life; but the greater the danger, the



stronger was his determination; for a free constitution of civil government could not be purchased at too dear a rate. He called to mind the fixed rule of the Romans, never to send or receive ambassadors to treat of peace with their enemies while their affairs were in a disastrous situation; and he was cheered by the belief that his countrymen were of the same temper and principle.

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At the appointed hour, the members, probably on that day fifty in number, appeared in their places; among them the delegates lately chosen in New Jersey. The great occasion had brought forth superior statesmen; none of them passionate revolutionists, but men who joined the power of moderation to energy. After they had all passed away, their longevity was remarked as a proof of their calm and temperate nature; full two thirds of the New England representatives lived beyond seventy years; some of them to be eighty or ninety. Every colony was found to be represented, and the delegates of all but one had received full power of action. Comprehensive instructions, reaching the question of independence without explicitly using the word, had been given by Massachusetts in January, by South Carolina in March, by Georgia on the fifth of April. North Carolina, in the words of Cornelius Harnett, on the twelfth of April, was the first to direct expressly its representatives in congress to concur in a declaration of independence. On the first of May, Massachusetts expunged the regal style from all public proceedings, and substituted the name of her "government and people;" on the fourth, Rhode Island more explicitly renounced allegiance, and made its delegates the rep-

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representatives of an independent republic ; Virginia on the fifteenth, the very day on which John Adams in congress carried his measure for instituting governments by the sole authority of the people, gave her delegates at Philadelphia the positive direction to propose independence, and by a circular letter communicated her decision to all her sister colonies. The movement of Virginia was seconded almost in her words by Connecticut on the fourteenth of June, New Hampshire on the fifteenth, New Jersey on the twenty first, the conference of committees of Pennsylvania on the twenty fourth, Maryland on the twenty eighth. Delaware on the twenty second of March had still hoped for conciliation ; but on the fifteenth of June she instructed her delegates to concur in forming further compacts between the United Colonies, concluding treaties with foreign powers, and adopting such other measures as should be deemed necessary for promoting the liberty, safety, and interests of America. The vote of the eleventh of June showed the purpose of New York ; but under the accumulation of dangers, her statesmen waited a few days longer, that her voice for independence might have the full authority of her people.

The business of the day began with reading various letters, among others one from Washington, who returned the whole number of his men, present and fit for duty, including the one regiment of artillery, at seven thousand seven hundred and fifty four. The state of the arms of this small and inconsiderable body was still more inauspicious ; of near fourteen hundred the firelocks were bad ; more than eight hundred had none at all ; three thousand eight hundred and twenty seven, more than half the whole

number of infantry, had no bayonets. Of the militia who had been called for, only about a thousand had joined the camp; and with this force the general was to defend extensive lines against an army, near at hand, of thirty thousand veterans. An express from Lee made known, that fifty three ships, with Clinton, had arrived before Charleston, of which the safety was involved in doubt.

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A more cheering letter which Chase had forwarded by express from Annapolis, brought the first news of the unanimity of the Maryland convention, whose vote for independence was produced and read.

The order of the day came next, and congress resolved itself "into a committee of the whole to take into consideration the resolution respecting independency." For a few minutes, perfect silence prevailed; every one felt the responsibility of acting finally on the most important question ever agitated in the assembly. In the absence of the mover of the resolution, the eyes of every one turned towards its seconder, John Adams; and the new members from New Jersey requested that the arguments used in former debates might be recapitulated. He had made no preparation for that morning; but for many months independence had been the chief object of his thoughts and his discourse, and the strongest arguments ranged themselves before his mind in their natural order. Of his sudden, impetuous, unpremeditated speech no minutes ever existed, and no report was ever made. It is only remembered that he set forth the justice, the necessity, and the advantages of a separation from Great Britain; he dwelt on the neglect and insult with which their petitions had been treated by the king;

CHAP. and on that vindictive spirit, which showed itself in  
 LXIX. the employment of German troops, whose arrival was  
 1776 hourly expected, to compel the colonists to uncon-  
 July ditional submission. He concluded by urging the  
 1. present time as the most suitable for resolving on independence, inasmuch as it had become the first wish and the last instruction of the communities they represented.

Dickinson of Pennsylvania rose not so much to reply, as to justify himself before congress. He took pride in being the ardent assertor of freedom; and was conscious that his writings had won him a great name. Accustomed to lead, he loved to be recognized as the guide. Now for the first time in his life his excessively sensitive nature was writhing under the agonies of wounded self-love. For one year he had been at variance with John Adams, and during all that time had till recently triumphed over him or kept him at bay; congress had loved to employ his pen, and had been only too ready to follow his counsel; yet at last he had been baffled even in his own province. He had seen the proprietary government go to its long sleep in the house of its friends; he had seen a delegate from Delaware bring before congress from the Pennsylvania conference instructions in favor of independence, which he did not mean to regard; and he had prepared himself with the utmost care to vindicate his opinions, which he would have held it guilt to suppress. It is from the report made by himself, that I abridge his elaborate discourse, using no words but his own:

“I value the love of my country as I ought, but I value my country more, and I desire this illustrious



assembly to witness the integrity, if not the policy, of my conduct. The first campaign will be decisive of the controversy. The declaration will not strengthen us by one man, or by the least supply, while it may expose our soldiers to additional cruelties and outrages. Without some prelusory trials of our strength we ought not to commit our country upon an alternative, where to recede would be infamy, and to persist might be destruction.

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“No instance is recollected of a people, without a battle fought, or an ally gained, abrogating forever their connection with a warlike commercial empire. It might unite the different parties in Great Britain against us, and it might create disunion among ourselves.

“With other powers it would rather injure than avail us. Foreign aid will not be obtained but by our actions in the field, which are the only evidences of our union and vigor that will be respected. In the war between the United Provinces and Spain, France and England assisted the provinces before they declared themselves independent; if it is the interest of any European kingdom to aid us, we shall be aided without such a declaration; if it is not, we shall not be aided with it. Before such an irrevocable step shall be taken, we ought to know the disposition of the great powers; and how far they will permit any one or more of them to interfere. The erection of an independent empire on this continent is a phenomenon in the world; its effects will be immense, and may vibrate round the globe. How they may affect, or be supposed to affect, old establishments, is not ascertained. It is singularly disrespectful to France,

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to make the declaration before her sense is known, as we have sent an agent expressly to inquire whether such a declaration would be acceptable to her, and we have reason to believe he is now arrived at the court of Versailles. The measure ought to be delayed, till the common interests shall in the best manner be consulted by common consent. Besides, the door to accommodation with Great Britain ought not to be shut, until we know what terms can be obtained from some competent power. Thus to break with her before we have compacted with another, is to make experiments on the lives and liberties of my countrymen, which I would sooner die than agree to make; at best it is to throw us into the hands of some other power, and to lie at mercy, for we shall have passed the river that is never to be repassed. We ought to retain the declaration, and remain masters of our own fame and fate. We ought to inform that power, that we are filled with a just detestation of our oppressors; that we are determined to cast off forever all subjection to them, to declare ourselves independent, and to support that declaration with our lives and fortunes, provided that power will approve the proceeding, acknowledge our independence, and enter into a treaty with us upon equitable and advantageous conditions.

“Other objections to the declaration at this time are suggested by our internal circumstances. The formation of our governments, and an agreement upon the terms of our confederation, ought to precede the assumption of our station among sovereigns. A sovereignty composed of several distinct bodies of men, not subject to established constitutions, and not combined together by confirmed articles of union, is such

a sovereignty as has never appeared. These particulars would not be unobserved by foreign kingdoms and states, and they will wait for other proofs of political energy, before they will treat us with the desired attention.

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“With respect to ourselves, the consideration is still more serious. The forming of our governments is a new and difficult work. When this is done, and the people perceive that they and their posterity are to live under well regulated constitutions, they will be encouraged to look forward to independence, as completing the noble system of their political happiness. The objects nearest to them are now enveloped in clouds, and those more distant appear confused; the relation one citizen is to bear to another, and the connection one state is to have with another, they do not, cannot, know. Mankind are naturally attached to plans of government that promise quiet and security. General satisfaction with them, when formed, would indeed be a great point attained; but persons of reflection will perhaps think it absolutely necessary, that congress should institute some mode for preserving them from future discords.

“The confederation ought to be settled before the declaration of independence. Foreigners will think it most regular; the weaker states will not be in so much danger of having disadvantageous terms imposed upon them by the stronger. If the declaration is first made, political necessities may urge on the acceptance of conditions, highly disagreeable to parts of the Union. The present comparative circumstances of the colonies are now tolerably well understood; but some have very extraordinary claims to territory,

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that if admitted, as they might be in a future confederation, the terms of it not being yet adjusted, all idea of the present comparison between them would be confounded. Those whose boundaries are acknowledged would sink in proportion to the elevation of their neighbors. Besides; the unlocated lands, not comprehended within acknowledged boundaries, are deemed a fund sufficient to defray a vast part, if not the whole, of the expenses of the war. These ought to be considered as the property of all, acquired by the arms of all. For these reasons, the boundaries of the colonies ought to be fixed before the declaration, and their respective rights mutually guarantied; and the unlocated lands ought also, previous to that declaration, to be solemnly appropriated to the benefit of all; for it may be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to obtain these decisions afterwards. Upon the whole, when things shall be thus deliberately rendered firm at home, and favorable abroad, then let America, '*Attollens humeris famam et fata nepotum,*' bearing up her glory and the destiny of her descendants, advance with majestic steps and assume her station among the sovereigns of the world."

Wilson of Pennsylvania could no longer agree with his colleague. He had at an early day foreseen independence as the probable, though not the intended result of the contest; he had uniformly declared in his place, that he never would vote for it contrary to his instructions, nay, that he regarded it as something more than presumption to take a step of such importance without express instructions and authority. "For," said he, "ought this act to be the act of four or five individuals, or should it be the act of the people



of Pennsylvania?" But now that their authority was communicated by the conference of committees, he stood on very different ground.

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Witherspoon of New Jersey urged that the country was fully ripe for the great decision, that delay alone was fraught with peril. Others spoke; among them probably Paca of Maryland, Mackean of Delaware, and undoubtedly Edward Rutledge of South Carolina; but I have not met with any authentic record of their remarks. Richard Henry Lee and Wythe were both on that day attendants on the Virginia convention in Williamsburg. Before the vote was taken, the delegates from New York, of whom all but Alsop were personally ready to vote for independence and were confident of the adhesion of their constituents, read to the committee a letter which they had received from the provincial congress, explaining why their formal concurrence must, for a few days longer, be withheld. The resolution for independence was then sustained by nine colonies, two thirds of the whole number; the vote of South Carolina, unanimously, it would seem, was in the negative; so was that of Pennsylvania, by the vote of Dickinson, Morris, Humphreys, and Willing, against Franklin, Morton, and Wilson; owing to the absence of Rodney, Delaware was divided, each member voting under the new instruction according to his former known opinion, Mackean for independence and Read against it.

The committee rose, and Harrison reported the resolution; but at the request of Edward Rutledge, on behalf of South Carolina, the determination upon it was put off till the next day.

A letter from Washington of the twenty ninth of

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June, was then read, from which it appeared that Howe and forty five ships or more, laden with troops, had arrived at Sandy Hook, and that the whole fleet was expected in a day or two. "I am hopeful," wrote the general, "that I shall get some reënforcements before they are prepared to attack; be that as it may, I shall make the best disposition I can of our troops." Not all who were round him had firmness like his own; Reed, the new adjutant general, quailed before the inequality of the British and American force, and thus in private described the state of the American camp: "With an army of force before, and a secret one behind, we stand on a point of land, with six thousand old troops, if a year's service of about half can entitle them to the name, and about fifteen hundred new levies of this province, many disaffected and more doubtful; every man, from the general to the private, acquainted with our true situation, is exceedingly discouraged; had I known the true posture of affairs, no consideration would have tempted me to have taken an active part in this scene; and this sentiment is universal." No one knew better than the commander in chief the exceedingly discouraging aspect of military affairs; but his serene and unfaltering courage in this hour was a support to congress. His letter was referred to the board of war, which they had recently established, and of which John Adams was the president; the faculties of the members were on that day too intensely strained by their enthusiasm to be much agitated by reports of danger. Especially John Adams, revolving the incidents of the day at its close, not disguising to his

own mind the approaching terrible conflict of which America could not ward off the calamities, not even flattering himself with halcyon days among the colonies after their separation from Great Britain, was content with what he had done; for freedom was in his eyes a counterbalance to poverty, discord, war, and more.

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On the second day of July there were present in congress probably forty-nine members. Rodney had arrived from Delaware, and joining Mackean, secured that colony. Dickinson and Morris stayed away, which enabled Franklin, Wilson, and Morton, of Pennsylvania, to outvote Willing and Humphreys. The South Carolina members, for the sake of unanimity, came round; so though New York was still unable to vote, twelve colonies, without one dissenting one, resolved: "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

2.

At the end of this great day, the mind of John Adams heaved like the ocean after a storm. "The greatest question," he wrote, "was decided which ever was debated in America, and a greater, perhaps, never was nor will be decided among men. When I look back to 1761, and run through the series of political events, the chain of causes and effects, I am surprised at the suddenness as well as greatness of this revolution. Britain has been filled with folly, and America with wisdom. It is the will of Heaven that the two

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countries should be sundered forever; it may be the will of Heaven that America shall suffer calamities still more wasting, and distresses yet more dreadful. If this is to be the case, the furnace of affliction produces refinement in states as well as individuals; but I submit all my hopes and fears to an overruling Providence, in which, unfashionable as the faith may be, I firmly believe.

“Had a declaration of independence been made seven months ago, we might before this hour have formed alliances with foreign states; we should have mastered Quebec, and been in possession of Canada; but on the other hand, the delay has many great advantages attending it. The hopes of reconciliation which were fondly entertained by multitudes of the honest and well meaning though weak and mistaken, have been gradually and at last totally extinguished. Time has been given for the whole people maturely to consider the great question of independence, so that in every colony of the thirteen, they have now adopted it as their own act.

“But the day is past. The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epocha in the history of America; to be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival, commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward forever more.

“You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toil, and blood, and treasure that it will cost us to maintain this



declaration, and support and defend these states; yet through all the gloom, I can see the rays of light and glory; that the end is worth all the means; that posterity will triumph in that day's transaction, even though we should rue it, which I trust in God we shall not."

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## CHAPTER LXX.

### THE DECLARATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

JULY 2-4, 1776.

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THE resolution of congress changed the old thirteen British colonies into free and independent states. It remained to set forth the reason for this act, and the principles which the new people would own as their guides. Of the committee appointed for that duty, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia had received the largest number of votes, and was in that manner singled out to draft the confession of faith of the rising empire. He owed this distinction to respect for the colony which he represented, to the consummate ability of the state papers which he had already written, and to that general favor which follows merit, modesty, and a sweet disposition; but the quality which specially fitted him for the task was the sympathetic character of his nature, by which he was able with instinctive perception to read the soul of the nation, and having collected in himself its best thoughts and noblest feelings, to give them out in clear and bold

words, mixed with so little of himself, that his country, as it went along with him, found nothing but what it recognized as its own. No man of his century had more trust in the collective reason and conscience of his fellow men, or better knew how to take their counsel; and in return he came to be a ruler over the willing in the world of opinion. Born to an independent fortune, he had from his youth been an indefatigable student. Of a calm temperament and a philosophic cast of mind, always temperate in his mode of life and decorous in his manners, he was a perfect master of his passions. He was of a delicate organization, and fond of elegance; his tastes were refined; laborious in his application to business or the pursuit of knowledge, music, the most spiritual of all pleasures of the senses, was his favorite recreation; and he took a never-failing delight in the beauty of the various scenery of rural life, building himself a home in the loveliest region of his native state. He was a skilful horseman; and he also delighted to roam the mountains on foot. The range of his knowledge was very wide; he was not unfamiliar with the literature of Greece and Rome; had an aptitude for mathematics and mechanics; and loved especially the natural sciences; scorning nothing but metaphysics. British governors and officials had introduced into Williamsburg the prevalent freethinking of Englishmen of that century, and Jefferson had grown up in its atmosphere; he was not only a hater of priestcraft and superstition and bigotry and intolerance he was thought to be indifferent to religion; yet his instincts all inclined him to trace every fact to a general law, and to put faith in ideal truth; the world

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of the senses did not bound his aspirations, and he believed more than he himself was aware of. He was an idealist in his habits of thought and life, as indeed is every one who has an abiding and thorough confidence in the people; and he was kept so in spite of circumstances by the irresistible bent of his character. He had great power in mastering details as well as in searching for general principles. His profession was that of the law, in which he was methodical, painstaking, and successful; at the same time he studied law as a science, and was well read in the law of nature and of nations. Whatever he had to do, it was his custom to prepare himself for it carefully; and in public life, when others were at fault, they often found that he had already hewed out the way; so that in council men willingly gave him the lead, which he never appeared to claim, and was always able to undertake. But he rarely spoke in public, and was less fit to engage in the war of debate, than calmly to sum up its conclusions. It was a beautiful trait in his character that he was free from envy; and had he kept silence, John Adams would have wanted the best witness to his greatness as the ablest advocate and defender of independence. A common object now riveted the two statesmen together in close bonds. I cannot find that at that period Jefferson had an enemy; by the general consent of Virginia, he already stood first among her civilians. Just thirty three years old, married, and happy in his family, affluent, with a bright career before him, he was no rash innovator by his character or his position; if his convictions drove him to demand independence, it was only because he could no longer live with honor



under the British constitution, which he still acknowledged to be the best that the world had thus far seen. His enunciation of general principles was fearless; but he was no visionary devotee of abstract theories, which, like disembodied souls, escape from every embrace; the nursling of his country, the offspring of his time, he set about the work of a practical statesman, and his measures grew so naturally out of previous law and the facts of the past, that they struck deep root and have endured.

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From the fulness of his own mind, without consulting one single book, Jefferson drafted the declaration; he submitted it separately to Franklin and to John Adams, accepted from each of them one or two verbal, unimportant corrections, and on the twenty eighth of June reported it to congress, which now on the second of July, immediately after the resolution of independence, entered upon its consideration. During the remainder of that day, and the next two, the language, the statements, and the principles of the paper were closely scanned.

In the indictment against George the Third, Jefferson had written:

“He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every

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legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished dye, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another."

These words expressed with precision what had happened in Virginia; she, as well as other colonies, had perseveringly attempted to repress the slave-trade; the king had perseveringly used his veto to protect it; the governor, clothed with the king's authority, had invited slaves to rise against their masters; but it could not be truly said that all the colonies had been always without blame in regard to the commerce, or that in America it had been exclusively the guilt of the king of Great Britain; and therefore the severe strictures on the use of the king's negative, so Jefferson wrote for the guidance of history, "were disapproved by some southern gentlemen, whose reflections were not yet matured to the full abhorrence of that traffic; and the offensive expressions were immediately yielded." Congress had already manifested its own sentiments by the absolute prohibition of the slave-trade; and that prohibition was then respected in every one of the thirteen states, including South Carolina and Georgia. This is the occasion when the slave-trade was first branded as a piracy. Many statesmen, among them Edmund Pendleton, president of the Virginia convention, always regretted that the pas-

sage had been stricken out; and the earnestness of the denunciation lost its author no friends.

All other changes and omissions in Jefferson's paper were either insignificant, or much for the better, rendering its language more terse, more dispassionate, and more exact; and in the evening of the fourth day of July, New York still abstaining from the vote, twelve States, without one negative, agreed to this "Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and,

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accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:—

“He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

“He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

“He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

“He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.



“He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

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“He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

“He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

“He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

“He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

“He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

“He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislature.

“He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

“He has combined with others [that is, with the lords and commons of Britain] to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation: For quartering large bodies of

CHAP. armed troops among us: For protecting them by a  
LXX. mock trial, from punishment for any murders which  
1776. they should commit on the inhabitants of these States:  
July 4. For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:  
For imposing taxes on us without our consent: For  
depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by  
jury: For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for  
pretended offences: For abolishing the free system  
of English laws in a neighboring province, establish-  
ing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging  
its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example  
and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute  
rule into these colonies: For taking away our charters,  
abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fun-  
damentally, the forms of our governments: For sus-  
pending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves  
invested with power to legislate for us in all cases  
whatsoever.

“He has abdicated government here, by declaring  
us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

“He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts,  
burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our peo-  
ple.

“He is, at this time, transporting large armies of  
foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death,  
desolation, and tyranny already begun with circum-  
stances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in  
the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the  
head of a civilized nation.

“He has constrained our fellow citizens, taken cap-  
tive on the high seas, to bear arms against their coun-  
try, to become the executioners of their friends and  
brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

“He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction, of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

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“In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

“Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends.

“We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all

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allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain, is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

This immortal state paper, which for its composer was the aurora of enduring fame, was "the genuine effusion of the soul of the country at that time," the revelation of its mind, when, in its youth, its enthusiasm, its sublime confronting of danger, it rose to the highest creative powers of which man is capable. The bill of rights which it promulgates, is of rights that are older than human institutions, and spring from the eternal justice that is anterior to the state. Two political theories divided the world: one founded the commonwealth on the reason of state, the policy of expediency, the other on the immutable principles of morals; the new republic, as it took its place among the powers of the world, proclaimed its faith in the truth and reality and unchangeableness of freedom, virtue, and right. The heart of Jefferson in writing the declaration, and of congress in adopting it, beat for all humanity; the assertion of right was made for the entire world of mankind, and all coming generations, without any exception whatever; for the proposition which admits of exceptions can never be self-evident. As it was



put forth in the name of the ascendent people of that time, it was sure to make the circuit of the world, passing everywhere through the despotic countries of Europe ; and the astonished nations as they read that all men are created equal, started out of their lethargy, like those who have been exiles from childhood, when they suddenly hear the dimly remembered accents of their mother tongue.

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In the next place, the declaration, avoiding specious and vague generalities, grounds itself with anxious care upon the past, and reconciles right and fact. Of universal principles enough is repeated to prove that America chose for her own that system of politics which recognises the rule of eternal justice ; and independence is vindicated by the application of that rule to the grievous instructions, laws, and acts, proceeding from the king, in the exercise of his prerogative, or in concurrence with the lords and commons of Great Britain. The colonies professed to drive back innovations ; and not, with roving zeal, to overturn all traditional inequalities ; they were no rebels against the past, of which they knew the present to be the child ; with all the glad anticipations of greatness that broke forth from the prophetic soul of the youthful nation, they took their point of departure from the world as it was. They did not even declare against monarchy itself ; they sought no general overthrow of all kings, no universal system of republics ; nor did they cherish in their hearts a lurking hatred against princes. Loyalty to the house of Hanover had, for sixty years, been another name for the love of civil and religious liberty ; the vast majority, till

CHAP. within a few years or months, believed the English  
 LXX. constitution the best that had ever existed ; neither  
 1776. Franklin, nor Washington, nor John Adams, nor Jeffer-  
 July son, nor Jay, had ever expressed a preference for a re-  
 4. public. The voices that rose for independence, spoke  
 also for alliances with kings. The sovereignty of  
 George the Third was renounced, not because he was  
 a king, but because he was deemed to be "a tyrant."

The insurgents, as they took up self-government, manifested no impatience at the recollection of having been ruled by a royal line, no eagerness to blot out memorials of their former state ; they sent forth no Hugh Peter to recommend to the mother country the abolition of monarchy, which no one seems to have proposed or to have wished ; in the moment of revolution in America, they did not counsel the English to undertake a revolution. The republic was to America a godsend ; it came, though unsought, because society contained the elements of no other organization. Here, and, in that century, here only, was a people, which, by its education and large and long experience, was prepared to act as the depositary and carrier of all political power. America developed her choice from within herself ; and therefore it is, that, conscious of following an inner law, she never made herself a propagandist of her system, where the conditions of success were wanting.

Finally, the declaration was not only the announcement of the birth of a people, but the establishment of a national government ; a most imperfect one, it is true, but still a government, in conformity with the limited constituent powers which each colony had conferred

upon its delegates in congress. The war was no longer a civil war; Britain was become to the United States a foreign country. Every former subject of the British king in the thirteen colonies now owed primary allegiance to the dynasty of the people, and became a citizen of the new republic; except in this, every thing remained as before; every man retained his rights; the colonies did not dissolve into a state of nature; nor did the new people undertake a social revolution. The management of the internal police and government was carefully reserved to the separate states, which could, each for itself, enter upon the career of domestic reforms. But the states which were henceforth independent of Britain were not independent of one another: the United States of America assumed powers over war, peace, foreign alliances, and commerce.

The declaration was not signed by the members of congress on the day on which it was agreed to, but it was duly authenticated by the president and secretary, and published to the world. The nation, when it made the choice of a day for its great anniversary, selected not the day of the resolution of independence, when it closed the past, but that of the declaration of the principles on which it opened its new career.

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